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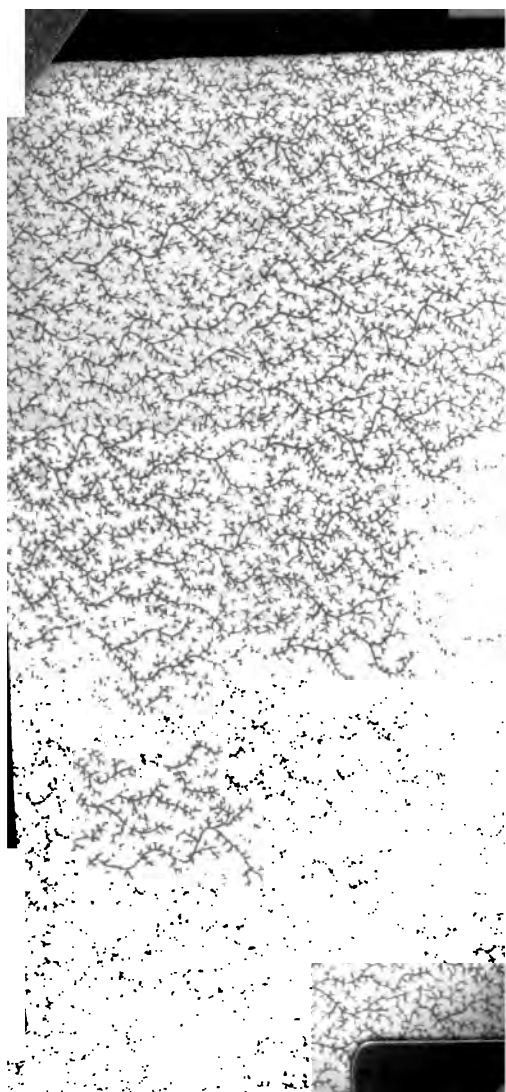
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17. *Portrait of a woman reading a book.*

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FOR

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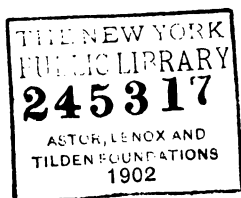
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TO

HER MAJESTY,

ADELAIDE, QUEEN DOWAGER,

**This Work**

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## PREFACE.

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THERE is a trite but true proverb, that practice ensures proficiency ; and writing prefaces is the exception which proves the rule, inasmuch as the difficulty of the task is enhanced on each recurring occasion. With reference, however, to a work, the success of which has been so marked and uniform as that of "FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING," it is perhaps a subject rather for congratulation than concern, that the Editor has nothing new to say for either the Proprietors or himself. He has the same amount of gratitude to acknowledge to the public, and, with one or two regretted exceptions, the same contributors to thank.

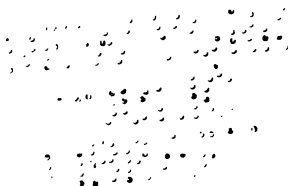


If there be any difference in the feelings with which he comes forward with another volume, it consists in the increased pride and confidence, with which, while he hopes the prose will at least bear comparison with that of former years, he points to its poetical contents. Poetry is the department which he has ever cultivated with scrupulous care, and, he flatters himself, never with so much success as in the present instance. Among the gifted writers, to whose valuable aid this success is attributable, the Editor may perhaps be pardoned an allusion to two, whom "FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING" has had the honour to introduce to the public: namely, THOMAS MILLER, who, while he has extended his fame as a poet, has taken high rank as a writer of historical romance; and the author of "*The Scythian Banquet Song*,"\* the appreciation of whose powers by the public has been confirmed by his University, which has recently awarded to him the prize for the best English poem. The Editor regrets that he is not permitted to allude by name to the contributor of "*The Poet's Heritage*," who, on a

\* And of "*The Scythian Guest*," and "*The Broken Chain*," in the *present volume*.

former distinguished occasion, received a similar honour from the same quarter.

With respect to the Illustrations, the Proprietors can only refer to the accession of talent exhibited in the list of Artists employed, as the best proof of their desire to make each succeeding Volume an improvement on the last, and thus appropriately to evince their sense of the patronage, which, for so many years, has been enjoyed by "FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING."





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## THE SON OF SOLYMAN.

### A Tale.

BY THE HON. MRS. ERSKINE NORTON.

Where every god did seem to set his seal,  
To give the world assurance of a man.

SHAKESPEARE.

It was on a lovely evening, early in the summer of 1553, that a light armed vessel, under Venetian colours, was observed threading the islands that lie close to the eastern shore of the Adriatic : silently and softly she glided along, as though conscious of danger from her Turkish foes ; the Republic and Solyman being, at that time, in open enmity.

The Venetian, though small, was well manned, armed, and a swift sailer ; she was considered to be more than a match for any Turkish vessel of her own calibre, having been very carefully appointed, in order to convey home in safety the orphan daughter of the late governor of Ragusa, with the treasures he had amassed.

Lavinia de Montero, arrayed in deep mourning, was seated on cushions on the upper part of the deck,



gazing with much interest on the fascinating, swiftly-flying scene before her. She was a beautiful girl of eighteen ; her mother had been an English lady of rank, married to her father when Ambassador in England, and from her she inherited "the large blue eyes, fair hair, and snowy hands," at that time so seldom seen, and so highly prized in the south of Europe ; but the turn of her features, and the vivacity of their expression, were purely Italian. To this rare union was added a form of exquisite symmetry and grace.

If in her person were combined, in a remarkable degree, the characteristic traits of English and Italian beauty, her mind not less partook of the peculiarities of her sex in both countries, with an equally favourable result. Impressed by her English mother, (whom she had had the misfortune to lose two years before the death of her father,) with the purest sentiments of religion and morality, the enthusiasm of her Italian nature was regulated, but not checked ; to the dignified simplicity of the English lady, was joined the keen susceptibility of the Italian ; and the quiet round of domestic duties was cheerfully and carefully performed by a mind imbued with the love, elevated by the study, and formed for the comprehension, of all that is grand and beautiful in nature and in art.

Lavinia had spent many happy years ; cherished in the hearts of her affectionate parents, surrounded by pomp and luxury, and at the head of a distinguished and agreeable society, occasionally varied by the visits of strangers of rank, who had lately spread the repu-



tation of Montero's lovely daughter, as well at Venice as at their own courts. She was now, it is true, returning to the home of her father, young and wealthy, but to relatives to whom she was a stranger, and to a society, which, from all she had heard of it, she rather dreaded than desired. She was without natural protection, and she felt timid and alone in the world.

Several of her Ragusan admirers, as well as some of the noble strangers, who had been her father's guests, attracted by the beauty and wealth of Lavinia, had placed themselves on her list of suitors; but hitherto she had remained "fancy free," or if her fancy were disturbed at all, it had been so by a very remarkable personage, under very extraordinary circumstances.

The Republic had complained, before the war actually broke out, of the incursions made by the Turks on their Dalmatian frontier. These were usually carried on by lawless bands, whose sole object was plunder; and as they had become very strong, and were alike a terror to their own people as well as to the Italians, it was deemed necessary to punish and restrain — and that means, in Turkish language — to annihilate them.

It so happened that, at this time, Mustapha, the eldest son of the Sultan, was in command of the adjacent provinces, and he resolved on rooting out these nests of robbers. He visited the frontiers himself, and so well had his measures been taken, that the blow fell before the guilty were aware of his presence.

One of these marauding bands, in the hope of a great ransom, had laid a plan for carrying off the

daughter of the Italian governor, during his retreat, in the hot season, to his country residence ; and they succeeded. But as they were making off with their prize, they were surrounded and destroyed by a party of their own countrymen, who were in attendance on Mustapha himself. He rescued the captive, and, with the utmost care and delicacy, restored her, with his own hands, to her despairing father, with whom he remained two days, and then departed.

History has done justice to the character of Mustapha. He was borne to the Sultan by a beautiful Circassian favourite, who expired in giving him birth. He had been carefully and affectionately reared by his father, and became his acknowledged heir. As yet, not even Roxalana, all-powerful as she was, had presumed to act against him ; on the contrary, one of the first means by which she attracted the attention of Solyman, was her tenderness, real or affected, to this motherless child ; her intentions, or feelings, whatever they were, or in whatever degree they changed when she herself gave more heirs to the Ottoman Empire, had hitherto been kept profoundly secret.

Mustapha was one of those magnificent beings, who, independent of station, country, education, and religion, stand apart from and above the rest of their species. Wise, just, merciful, generous, brave ; replete with the warmest affections of our nature, but almost free from its weaknesses. Affable, composed, and dignified, his presence inspired, in an equal degree, *affection* and reverence. His brow was lofty, intellec-

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tual and commanding ; his eye keen and penetrating, his smile gentle and captivating as a woman's.

Filial love and obedience formed a striking trait in the character of Mustapha. In Solyman he loved his father, revered his sovereign, and beheld, with pride, one of the most highly-gifted men of the age.

Such was he into whose hands the singular fate of Lavinia had thrown her under circumstances so full of danger and romance ; such was he whose forbidden image rose again and again to her memory, as she thought of the land she was leaving, and gazed on its fading shore. His parting words seemed again as though breathed into her ear, in their soft deep tone and foreign accent.

“ I thank you, lady ; you have taught me to respect your sex ! True, I have heard and read of its high capabilities of wisdom and virtue ; but I have never beheld or felt their influence until now. May the universal Father of us all bless you ! may you be happy, surrounded by love and peace ! Do not refuse *this*—it belonged to my mother ;” (and he threw a jewelled chain, with an ornament suspended, over her neck,) “ may it sometimes remind you of one who never can forget you, although a gulf, impassable as that spanned by Al Sirat's arch, divide us !”

As Lavinia repeated to herself these well-remembered words, she felt for the small ornament which lay next her heart ; the chain had taken its place among her other jewels ; but this she wore concealed, suspended by an almost imperceptible black silken thread

round her neck. It was evidently an amulet curiously enchased, and engraven with arabic letters, and in this character only, she accounted to herself for thus wearing it.

Lavinia was roused from her reverie by a sudden shout — on rounding a high and rocky cape they found themselves almost side by side with two Turkish vessels of war ; one, a brig about their own size, the other a frigate of very superior force.

There was scarcely time to hurry the women down to a place of comparative safety, ere the shot of the enemy swept the deck. The Venetian commander perceiving that opposition would be worse than useless, struck his colours, and, in a few minutes, the vessel was filled with armed Turks. Their commander having made his inquiries, was well satisfied to find that he had, together with so fine a vessel, possessed himself of a prisoner of consequence, and, what was more important, of great wealth, and that all her wealth was on board. He ordered that the lady should be taken to his ship, and that a sufficient guard should be placed on board the Venetian.

Lavinia stood, in the midst of her shrieking and fainting women, pale and trembling. She entreated that they might not be separated from her ; she was answered that she was at liberty to take what necessities she pleased, but no attendant, male or female. All she could do, therefore, was to implore for them, which she did on her knees, the care and protection of the Turkish officer left in charge.

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In a few minutes after, Lavinia de Montero was seated in the cabin of her captor, deprived, probably for ever, at one instantaneous and overwhelming blow, of liberty, of wealth, and of protection.

The Turkish commander was an old man, with a grave and placid air; the moment of excitement being past, he sat down to his pipe and sherbet as quietly as if nothing had occurred. He had looked at Lavinia sufficiently to ascertain that she would fetch an enormous price, or be rendered useful as a splendid gift. He gave her possession of his own cabin, which was luxuriously fitted up; introduced to her an aged menial, who was to be placed outside her door, together with a sentinel, and who would procure her any thing she desired that the ship could supply; he concluded by assuring her that she was in every respect in the most perfect safety, and recommended to her not to grieve, as that would mar her beauty, now her only fortune; and to be much more particular about keeping on her veil, as if it were known that her face had been seen, even by the sentinel, her value would be diminished.


From whatever motives her captor acted, the mind of Lavinia was freed from the apprehension of immediate danger: on her knees she humbly resigned herself to Providence, and implored its protection, especially for those from whom she had been thus cruelly separated; indeed their fate weighed more heavily than her own. "My riches are gone—let them go!" she exclaimed, with the carelessness of one, young and inexperienced, who had never known a

want, nor could imagine the appalling evil of poverty beyond those slighter degrees which she had been accustomed to relieve. "As to myself," she continued, in the same strain of youthful hope, "I can surely find means to apprise *him*—my noble and generous preserver—and then, *I* shall be safe. But for the poor people they have forced me from,—oh! how my heart bleeds for them!" and, without a thought on the old captain's recommendation, she wept long and sadly.

At day-break a meeting took place between the two Turkish commanders, and it was agreed that the brig should take the prize into a port of Albania, and that the ship should proceed, with as much expedition as possible, to Constantinople; where the commander was to exert all his interest to secure the possession of the prize to the two captors, representing her as very much beneath her real value, etc. But what they most relied upon to carry their object was, the presentation of their valuable captive to the Sultana, who, it was known, wished for an educated European, skilled especially in the arts of music and embroidery, partly as a companion for herself, and partly as an instructress to her daughter.

The vessels sailed in company until they reached Aviona; the brig and prize put into that port, and the ship, with Lavinia on board, proceeded to Constantinople.

It was on a brilliant morning, with a fresh and balmy breeze, that the frigate entered the Bosphorus. Lavinia



flew from one side of her prison-chamber to the other to enjoy all she could, through her half-closed Venetian blinds, of the surpassing beauty and attractive novelty of the scene through which she was rapidly moving: numerous vessels of all nations, with their various flags, from the terrific war-ship to the humble merchant-brig; and boats, from the gilded and painted barge, with its gay streamers, to the market skiff, fresh with fruit, flowers, and vegetables; all floating on an azure sea dimpling and sparkling beneath the rays of a cloudless sun. The Asiatic coast somewhat distant, was beautiful in its wavy outline and rich soft colouring. On the European side, close to the eye, rose verdant hills and woods, through which, here and there, peeped out cool refreshing streams, winding their way like silver threads beneath the protecting foliage, or bubbling and throwing up their spray from marble fountains. The tide was high, and the water, up to the very shore, so deep, that the branches of the overhanging trees swept the masts of the frigate as she glided along. Small mosques with their silver crescents, luxurious villas, baths, and alcoves of every shape and hue, were scattered amidst groves and highly ornamented gardens.

The walls of the city next appeared, and the frigate having threaded her way through the labyrinth of vessels, the country once more opened to the confined view of Lavinia. The Asiatic coast approached considerably, until evidently not above a mile separated it from that of Europe, and she could distinctly per-




ceive its villages, embosomed in trees, in the nooks of its picturesque hills, surrounded with their cultivated fields; but, on again turning to contemplate the Turkish side, the heart of Lavinia beat violently; the dark walls of the seraglio, stretching forth on its peninsula, rose before her, deeply shaded, together with its extensive gardens, in what appeared almost a forest of palm and cypress. From where she was she occasionally had a glimpse into the interior of the apartments in front, thrown open to the sea-breeze, her eye just catching their fretted and gilded ceilings, lustres and mirrors.

The frigate saluted the imperial standard, which being hoisted, proclaimed the presence of the Sultan; and immediately afterwards the cable was let go, and the sails were furled.

As soon as the ship was anchored, Lavinia observed the commander step into his boat alongside, and row to the palace.

It is impossible to describe the state of Lavinia's mind during the two hours of the captain's absence; she herself did not dare to analyze, though she struggled to regulate it. Astonishment at the singularity of her situation, hope, fear, grief, joy, and expectation knowing not on what to fasten, ruled by turns. At this moment the secret of her heart opened before her, and she vainly strove to close her eyes to the image it presented; time, absence, reason, and, above all, utter hopelessness, might have obliterated that image, but now all contributed to revive and foster it: Mustapha



was paramount in her thoughts, and they clung to him as to her only protector. He might be at this moment within those walls listening to the tale of her capture ; they would meet again, perhaps immediately, — what would be the result ? *Could* he, even if he would, restore her to her country ? All was doubt ; and sometimes a terrible idea would force its way — she might be heartlessly sold to a stranger without Mustapha ever hearing of her.

She was roused from this state of painful suspense by observing the captain's boat put off from the shore ; her eager eyes, despite the rapidly closing twilight, soon discovered that no one accompanied him. On his being announced at her cabin-door, she drew her veil close, and stood to receive him.

“ Lady,” he said, with much respect, “ peace be to you ! that which we think an evil, is often turned by Allah to our good. You deplored being a captive and deprived of your worldly wealth ; lo ! a captivity better than liberty, (more especially for one of your sex,) is prepared for you, and honour and luxury await you far beyond what your wealth could have purchased. The Sultana, the wedded wife of the great Solyman,” (he bowed to the ground,) “ the king of men, and the lord of kings, the star of the east, has deigned to accept you at these hands ; not as an article of merchandize, bought and sold, but as a free and honourable gift. Prepare yourself forthwith.”


It was sunset when Lavinia, so enveloped that she could hardly *breathe*, was landed by the captain from

his boat ; she was delivered to an old Nubian and two veiled females. The captain bowed profoundly and departed. The females took each a hand in silence, and followed the Nubian.

After passing through several courts and passages, where every man they met either ran away, or, turning his back, fell with his face to the ground, they arrived at a door which was opened at a signal from the Nubian, and which conducted them into a very long roofed gallery, raised considerably from the ground and latticed on both sides, over which odoriferous shrubs were carefully trained ; the floor was marble, and, here and there, small *jets-d'eau* refreshed the air, and gratified by their agreeable murmur and sparkling coolness. This was the promenade of the ladies, whenever they chose to prefer it to the gardens of the harem. At the further end a low arched door was open to receive the stranger, and through it she entered into the harem itself.

She was here informed by the Nubian that the Sultana had given orders that she should be immediately conducted into her presence : this order, no doubt, proceeded from a wish to see the stranger at once in her European costume.

Lavinia's heart beat quickly, and she scarcely noticed the long corridors and splendid apartments through which she was conducted to the presence of the extraordinary person, upon whom her fate depended, and whose *petit nez retroussé* had upset the laws of an empire ; who, ignobly born, had raised herself from



a harem slave to share the throne of the Othmans, who influenced the councils of a mighty nation, who had swayed for years, and still swayed with increasing power, the mind of the most potent and accomplished Turkish sovereign which history has presented to our view. That such was the case was well known in Europe, and the study of Roxalana's character was deemed an essential point with all diplomatic agents at the Ottoman court. That character had been variously represented, and no clear impression had been made concerning it on the mind of Lavinia.


At length a lighted anti-room, with female slaves arrayed in all colours, busy at the labours of the loom and the needle, both of which, however, were neglected to stare at the European captive, warned her that the folding doors, opening on the opposite side into a brilliantly illuminated apartment, would probably usher her into the presence of the Sultana; she collected herself and summoned all her resolution.

She entered a magnificent saloon, bright as day; the floor of marble, the walls seemingly of alabaster richly gilt and painted; fountains of rose-water, costly vases filled with flowers, sofas and ottomans of rich satin embroidered and fringed with gold. Females and children were grouped about the apartment; the attendants were known by their entire dress—full trowsers, long open vest, and turban — being simply of white muslin; a coloured silk sash confined the waist, the bandeau of the turban and unornamented slippers being of the *same* colour. The beautiful simplicity of this

dress contrasted well with the gorgeous array of about fifty ladies present, whose vests, turbans and slippers were of the richest coloured silks embroidered, as well as their white muslin trowsers and under-dresses, in gold or silver; they were decorated with the most splendid jewels, and generally wore small poniards, with handles set with precious stones, stuck into their costly girdles. The children were dressed in the same style, only, in lieu of turbans, they wore silk skull-caps tasselled and embroidered. The whole of this gorgeous scene was reflected by several Venetian mirrors of extraordinary size and perfection.

Lavinia entered in her simple mourning robe, "when unadorned, adorned the most;" for, simple and sombre as it appeared amongst all this glittering array, its long, tight and pointed waist, from which depended an ebon rosary, set off to admirable advantage the graceful contour of her youthful form; the white ruff encircled a throat of exquisite beauty, and the long, black, transparent veil, mingling with tresses of the brightest brown, heightened rather than shaded the dazzling fairness and soft bloom of her complexion.

Her eyes wandered confusedly, for a few moments, over the saloon, and finally rested on a group in the centre; where, on the cushions of a splendid ottoman, reclined a lady of a very peculiar style of beauty. Her figure was small, rounded with extreme softness and delicacy, her complexion of the palest olive, that of the south of Russia, but the skin so smooth and transparent, that the "eloquent blood" spoke as clearly



in her cheek as in that of the fairest European. Her hair was jet-black, wavy, thick, and very long, yet of so fine a texture that, when gathered in the hand, its substance, so profuse to the eye, seemed almost to vanish to the touch; her eyes were large and black, their usual expression soft and thoughtful, but always free from the inane languor so common to those of the Eastern women; they lighted up when she spoke, and beamed with animation and intelligence on her becoming interested, but they flashed with vivid and overpowering fire when excited by anger. Her lips, disclosing teeth of perfect beauty, were full in shape and rich in colour, their turned-up corners, with her *petit nez retroussé*, gave that character of archness and humour to her countenance which suited so well the graceful levity of manner, the quick repartee and clever mimicry, with which she well knew how to vary the pleasures of her society in those hours which the doating Solyman stole from war and business to devote to her. Roxalana was no longer young; she was already the mother of grown-up sons, and, on a cushion at her feet, sat a lovely girl of fourteen, her daughter; but this fact Lavinia could never have learned from the evidence of her senses; she required to be informed of it, and with every assurance could scarcely give it credit.

On the entrance of Lavinia, the various groups scattered over the saloon approached the ottoman of the Sultana, who, as the stranger advanced, raised herself from her reclining position, and looked steadily

at her ; when near enough, Lavinia curtsyed profoundly and respectfully ; the Sultana smiled, and, taking her kindly by the hand, seated her on a cushion by her daughter, and immediately entered into conversation with her in Italian, which she spoke tolerably. She asked a number of questions concerning her parents, the life she had hitherto led, and the particulars of her capture ; she concluded by expressing great pleasure at finding her of noble birth, being well acquainted with the name of her father, and by assuring her of her utmost favour and protection, so that she should find her captivity only such in name : “ To your own country you are a stranger,” continued the Sultana, “ and therefore will the sooner learn to love the one which now adopts you ; your parents are no more, and of your surviving relatives you say that you have no recollection : we will be to you as parents and relatives. You have lost your wealth—look around you, and behold in exchange the riches of an empire ! We desire not to interfere with your religious observances, and even your European mode of dress you may preserve should you continue to prefer it ; you will have all the liberty which our laws and customs allow to our sex ; those cannot be altered in your favour, whatever confidence we may have in your prudence and virtue ; still you will not find them so rigorous as, in common with other Christians, you have no doubt been led to believe.”

Two rooms near the apartments of the Sultana, were appointed for the reception of the stranger ; they

opened into a trellised balcony which looked out immediately on the gardens, but from a corner of which might be caught a glimpse of the Bosphorus. An old female slave was nominated her attendant, and every indulgence was shown to her ; her chambers were arranged as nearly as possible to her own taste ; such books in the European languages as could be procured, together with musical instruments, materials for writing, drawing and embroidery, were immediately obtained, and others sent for from more distant capitals.

The quiet and regularity of her new mode of life struck Lavinia as extraordinary, close as she was to a great, commercial and warlike city, surrounded by persons of the first importance engaged in the most weighty affairs, by intrigue and violence, by a military and naval force, and by envoys and communications from all quarters of the globe. Trumpets were sounding, guns firing, bells tolling, horses clattering backwards and forwards, vessels anchoring, and boats landing ; while, in the midst of all, she dwelt as in a hermitage. She was permitted to walk in the gardens early in the mornings properly veiled and attended ; here, in the long, shaded and silent walks, she met with nothing but fresh flowers, and a few warbling birds, save, now and then, a lady of the harem muffled and attended as herself, who passed with a simple inclination of courtsey. Refreshments on trays were brought to her twice during the day. About an hour before mid-day she usually received a summons to attend the Sultana and her daughter, with whom she



remained, for two or three hours, engaged in various branches of study; during this time no extraneous conversation was permitted, and she returned to her solitary meal. The succeeding hour of *siesta* was as tranquil as that of midnight throughout the palace and its precincts. If afterwards the Sultana accompanied the Sultan in a barge or litter, or that he visited with her the gardens of the seraglio, the attendance of the young stranger was dispensed with; but if not, she usually accompanied the Sultana in her hour of exercise, whether in the gardens or in the gallery already described; on such occasions the other ladies managed to keep out of the way, or, if a meeting were unavoidable, they drew on one side, bowing to the ground, the Sultana noticing them by a slight nod. Occasionally a reception in the evening took place, similar to the one in the midst of which Lavinia had been first introduced; on these occasions not only the ladies of the seraglio, but those of the Vizier and other officers of state, attended to pay court to the wife of their sovereign, distinguished as *the Sultana*, none else being permitted to assume that title from the moment of her remarkable marriage, although previously it had been bestowed, and still is, upon all the mothers of the Sultan's children.

During the attendance of Lavinia on the Sultana and her daughter, either at the hour of exercise, or on evenings when the Sultan or his sons were not expected, the conversation was studiously confined to general subjects; no reference was made to public or private

affairs, the name of the Sultan was never mentioned, nor those of his sons, nor of any male member of the imperial family ; neither was allusion ever made to the ladies of the harem or their children, whom apparently the Sultana never saw except upon the state occasions already described. Lavinia was ignorant of the manner in which the mother and daughter employed those hours during which she was not admitted, and which she herself spent in the privacy of her own apartment, having no communication with any one except her attendant.


Her first object was to attain a knowledge of the language, and to this she steadily applied herself. With some assistance from the Sultana, and a good deal from old Lolah, she soon succeeded sufficiently for all necessary purposes, and Lolah speedily acquired the habit of understanding her half-formed expressions, explaining and correcting them.

Her attendant was at first taciturn and indifferent, with a mere mechanical attention to her duties ; but, by degrees, her heart seemed to warm towards her young charge, and her interest and sympathy increased as they became more able to converse ; but Lolah was as cautious and reserved as might be expected from one who had lived, from her youth up, within the precincts of the seraglio, with the bow-string ever before her eyes.

Such is a sketch of the singular and melancholy mode of life led by the captive, for the first few weeks, within the walls of her magnificent prison. The

degree of interest which it possessed from novelty, habit was wearing fast away, but the interest peculiar to the situation of Lavinia, prevented her suffering from its depressing monotony. The idea of Mustapha, the intention of escape, the feeling rather than the belief that she was on the verge of great events, all mingled, somewhat confusedly indeed, in her mind, but kept it in a state of expectation, ready to be called into action, and keenly attentive to all that passed.

One evening, when seated with Roxalana and the young Mirza, touching the chords of her lute, and accompanying herself to an exquisite little Italian air—a favourite of the Sultana's—wrapt up like a true child of Italy in her art, she had not noticed certain meaning glances and smiles passing between the mother and daughter, and was utterly astonished on finishing her performance, and on rising to lay down the instrument, to find standing close at her side, a young man in splendid Turkish costume. So strong had the force of habit already become, that she started, blushed, and was about to let down her veil, but Roxalana prevented her, and, taking her hand, said, with one of her most fascinating smiles: “You see that we venture to treat you according to your own customs: my eldest son, Selymus, was anxious to behold our lovely stranger, and I was quite sure we should not offend you by allowing him that happiness.” Lavinia instantly recovered herself, and curtsied to the prince, who slightly returned the salutation, keeping his large dark eyes intently fixed upon her.



Roxalana, with her accustomed tact, led the conversation, touching upon several interesting subjects ; and, at first, Lavinia joined her with her usual freedom, modesty, and good sense ; but she gradually felt restrained and abashed on observing that, although frequently appealed to by his mother, Selymus only answered by a monosyllable or an inclination of the head ; his look continually fixed on herself with a bold inquisitive stare. He seemed to listen attentively when she spoke, but was evidently less interested in the matter of what she said than in her manner, and in the changes of her expressive countenance ; and even, when she was manifestly pained by his intent observation, and shrinking from it, he had either not the sense or not the feeling to withdraw it. He was very handsome, greatly resembling his mother, but wanted altogether the force of her intellectual expression ; none could be traced on his finely formed features save that of pride or of sensuality.

On the following morning, at the usual hour of meeting, the Sultana greeted Lavinia with an affectionate smile, imprinting a kiss on her forehead. "My second daughter ! may you be happy ! Mirza, salute your sister ! That look of surprise, my Lavinia, will, I trust, change to one of joy and gratitude when you learn that my beloved son Selymus, son of the great Solyman, lord of the East, and first of the sovereigns of this earth—that he, having seen you, approves, admires, and loves you ! that he has, upon his knees, entreated me to yield you to him to make you the queen of his harem,

the best beloved of his heart, to give heirs to the blood of Solyman, and perhaps," (she lowered her voice and looked cautiously round,) "and perhaps to his throne! What luxury, what grandeur, what happiness are thine, Lavinia! and how blessed am I to be able thus to bestow on my son a maiden of noble European blood, most rarely and richly gifted in heart, and mind, and person!—one, whom I love, and who loves me! is it not so? O! this is beyond my most sanguine hopes!" Roxalana, in the *laissez aller* of her undoubting confidence and joy, had thrown her arm round the waist of Lavinia, and caught her hand in hers, but, as she rapidly breathed the last words, the slight pressure on her arm increased, and the cold pale cheek of Lavinia fell on her shoulder: "She has fainted," continued the Sultana, "fainted from excess of joy—call for assistance, Mirza!"

"There is no need, my sister," exclaimed Selymus, advancing from behind the drapery that concealed a small door, "assistance is at hand;" and, without further ceremony, he took the lifeless form of Lavinia from the supporting arms of his mother, and folding her in his, kissed her vehemently.

This violence soon recalled her senses, momentarily suspended from excess of astonishment, grief and terror. Extricating herself by a sudden effort, she sprang from him with a look of abhorrence and indignation, and threw herself at the feet of the Sultana: "My kind protectress! by all that is dear to you, I conjure you not to permit this outrage upon my

womanly and christian feelings." She suddenly paused, for, on raising her eyes to the face of Roxalana, she found the expression of that face so utterly changed that it could scarcely be recognized. The poor suppliant no longer ventured to plead, but covered her eyes with her hands, and, in the hopeless anguish of the moment, she, screaming and springing to her feet, rushed from the apartment, and fled into her own. She fastened the door, and threw herself on her bed, when a sudden burst of tears relieved her from the overpowering violence of her emotion.

Lolah gently approached the bed, and on Lavinia becoming more composed, ventured to inquire the cause of her distress.

"Simply this," replied the indignant Lavinia, "Selymus desires me for his harem, and I would rather die than go there." She then briefly detailed what had passed.

Lolah listened in fear and amazement, wringing her hands, and exclaiming that Lavinia was lost and doomed: "Prepare yourself—prepare yourself, my child! every moment may bring—" and she clasped her throat to signify the death that was approaching.

"O no, no!" exclaimed Lavinia, "they will not be so cruel! the disappointed Selymus, perhaps—in the first moments of his rage—but the Sultana, hitherto so kind and good, she will protect me!"

"She!" muttered Lolah, "the tigress! there may be hope in the rage of Selymus, but there is none—none in the deadly frown of Roxalana," and, as she

spoke, Lavinia recalled that *deadly frown*, and sighed as she repeated: "None, none! but you are right, Lolah, if I am to die, let me prepare myself!" She rose from the bed, arranged her disordered dress, removed the traces of her tears, and requesting Lolah to remain in the outward apartment, let fall the curtain which divided them, and addressed herself where hope and mercy alone were to be expected.

While Lavinia was thus engaged, a slight tap at the outward door roused the dejected Lolah, who cautiously opened it, but threw it wide and prostrated herself when she beheld the Princess Mirza with a single attendant: "Where is your lady?" she whispered. Lolah stepped forward, requesting by signs the princess to follow, and gently lifting up part of the curtain, pointed to the kneeling form of Lavinia. Tears started into the eyes of the young Mirza, whose first impulse was to retire awhile, but recollecting that a few minutes only were allowed her, she advanced. Lavinia looked round and started from her knees.

"O princess! it cannot be *you* that brings my death-warrant!"

"Allah forbid, my Lavinia!" replied Mirza; "I have gained for you at least a reprieve: to-morrow, at our usual hour of meeting for the evening, you are to send or bring your final answer."

"Thank you even for this!" replied Lavinia; "it will give me more time for preparation."

"Preparation for what?"

"For death."

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"I do not say that death will follow your refusal — at least — not — not immediately."

"No!" exclaimed Lavinia, with a searching look; "what then?" Mirza cast her eyes to the ground, and was silent. "Be it as it may," continued Lavinia, calmly, "my answer shall be given at the appointed time; and I thank you again and again, Princess —" she was interrupted by the quick peal of a shrill-toned bell apparently nearly over her own apartments, which she did not recollect to have heard before; it was followed almost immediately by a discharge of cannon. Mirza started and turned pale. "What is this?" inquired Lavinia.

"It is the announcement of an arrival, which will not contribute to restore my mother's good temper," replied Mirza, with a sigh; "but I have stayed my time. May Allah direct you right, Lavinia! I grieve for and pity you, but beyond what I have done, I dare neither counsel nor assist you." Lavinia raised the princess's hand to her lips, and accompanied her in silence to the corridor.

On re-entering, and again securing her door, Lavinia observed old Lolah moving about, and clasping her hands with an appearance of irrepressible joy.

"Ah, Lolah!" mournfully exclaimed Lavinia, "rejoice not too much for me! The kind princess has not been the messenger of pardon, but only of reprove; my fate is in my own hands until to-morrow evening."

"Until to-morrow evening!" repeated Lolah, "then



something may be done, but there is no time to be lost."

"What do you mean?"

"Heard you not that bell, lady?—O, that bell!—it always goes to my heart, for it never sounds save at *his* return or departure."

"At *his*! at whose?" eagerly inquired Lavinia.

"At my nursling's—*my* nursling, lady," (and Lolah drew herself up with pride,) "the son of the magnificent and invincible Solyman, the heir of this mighty empire, and the beloved of the hearts of its people—Mustapha! And if any one can save thee, lady, from dishonour and death, he can, and, at my intercession, he will."

For a few moments Lavinia was almost as much overpowered by the surprise of joy, as she had already been, on this eventful day, by surprise of a very different nature. When able to command her thoughts, she wisely considered that it would be better to make no half-confidence, where probably her safety entirely depended; she, therefore, related to the delighted Lolah the strange incident which had already introduced her to Mustapha, and on the conclusion of her tale, she drew from her bosom the concealed amulet. Lolah immediately recognised it; she knelt and touched it with her forehead and lips; "I marvel no longer that my heart, in spite of myself, warmed towards thee, lady—Frank and Christian though thou art—I see now it was this precious and sacred charm *that* attracted me. I know it well: these hands re-

moved it from the dead mother, (the beautiful Fatima — O ! how the Sultan mourned for her !) and fastened it round the neck of her babe.”

After a short conference, it was decided, that at the hour of siesta, Lolah should make use of her privilege as nurse, and proceed to the apartments of the prince. She was sure of being admitted, and of her visit creating no suspicion. She was to show him the amulet, and to inform him of the fate of its owner, and the critical situation in which she was at that moment placed.


At the appointed time Lavinia, with a beating heart, placed the chain and amulet in the hands of Lolah, and waited her return with as much doubt, fear and impatience, as the Juliet our Avon bard has described watching for that of a somewhat similar messenger on a somewhat similar errand.

A long, long hour passed away, and the quick ear of Lavinia caught, at last, the soft, slow step of her returning messenger. She gently undid the door, and peeped out, expecting that a glimpse of Lolah’s countenance would at least set her at rest as to the success of her mission ; but here she was disappointed, old Lolah was scrupulously veiled. On entering, she replaced the chain and amulet in the trembling hands of Lavinia, and kissing her cheek, whispered : “ It is all well, my child. With astonishment, pleasure and anxiety, he acknowledged the token, and listened to all I told him ; at times he seemed angry, and I could hear him grind his teeth, but he spoke not until I had finished ; then,

having thought a little, he said calmly and slowly :  
' Let the lady be with you at the usual hour of early walking to-morrow, at the large cypress tree, close by the brook, at the end of the second walk turning from the main avenue.' He then made several inquiries about you, and listened, with much interest and attention, to all my little details ; I could have gone on for another hour, but he would not let me, and reminding me that you must be in a state of much suspense and uneasiness, he dismissed me."

Lavinia threw herself on her knees, and thanked Heaven for this gleam of hope and deliverance. She retired to bed soon, to obtain, if possible, some repose after the various agitations of the day, and to strengthen her for those which, on the morrow, would probably be her lot.

At an early hour they arose, and, mantled and veiled as usual, sallied forth. The morning was beautiful. They walked at first down the principal avenue, following another lady and attendant ; when near the appointed turning, they slackened their pace, and entered it entirely unobserved. Breathless with agitation they hastened along ; the path became narrow, winding and very closely shaded ; they heard the purling of the brook, and, in a minute after, found themselves under the large cypress which overhung it. It was a dark, sheltered and retired nook, to which Lavinia had never yet penetrated. There was no one there, and they stood waiting in anxious silence ; at length a slight rustling of leaves announced an approach ; it was an old swarthy



Nubian, who paused and eyed them attentively ; he then showed to Lolah a signet-ring, and beckoned them to follow ; they did so, and having been conducted a few steps through brushwood, where there was no path, they came suddenly on a somewhat dilapidated summer-house ; on the floor were three large, deep wooden trays ; one of these was piled up with a quantity of muslins and stuffs covered with a fringed scarlet cloth ; the two others were only slightly spread, but portions of the same materials stood ready apparently to be packed in them. The Nubian signed to Lolah to lie down in one of these trays, which she did without hesitation ; he then proceeded to cover her up, shaking the stuffs and muslins so lightly and dexterously over her as to give the appearance of bulk, without any proportionable substance ; over all was thrown a fringed yellow covering. He then respectfully signed to Lavinia to dispose of herself in the other tray, which she also immediately did, and even in the midst of her trepidation, could not suppress a smile at the singular and comfortable manner in which she was packed up ; a covering of green was thrown over her tray. When both were ready, the Nubian went outside, and called to some persons apparently at a distance ; Lavinia understood enough of the language to make out pretty nearly what was said. " Come," he cried, as the parties advanced, " how much longer am I to wait for your breaking your fast, and smoking your pipes ! have we not orders to get these things out early ?" Six bearers entered, and were arranged to

the different trays according to their strength and size; when stooping and passing the leathern straps round their necks in order to raise the trays, the two who bore Lavinia observed: "This is heavier than it looks."

"Yes," replied their employer, "that contains in the centre some solid pieces of cut glass; walk straight and carefully, or you may chance to do a mischief."

"If that contain solid glass," said one of the bearers, who was tugging up old Lolah, "what solid stuff may this have in it, I marvel?" However, when the trays had once gained their level, and a start was made, they were borne on quickly and steadily by the habituated and experienced bearers.

They proceeded direct and unquestioned to the principal entrance of the seraglio; the scarlet first, the green in the centre, and the yellow behind. Here they were stopped by the officer on duty: "What do these trays contain?"

"Chiefly stuffs and muslins," replied their conductor.

"To whom do they belong?"

"To the Prince Mustapha."

"Where are they going?" continued the officer, drawing his hand over the scarlet-covered tray: "One, as a present to the captain in whose frigate the prince arrived yesterday; the other two are for his highness's harem."

"Mahmoud!" exclaimed at that moment a voice, which vibrated to the heart of Lavinia, "you are *somewhat* late, and will lose the tide. Sir," address-

ing the officer, "will you be so obliging as to allow these trays to pass without further examination?"

"My lord!" exclaimed the astonished functionary, prostrating himself, "I — I — I —" then starting up he gave the order to pass.

"Is it of any consequence, my lord," inquired Mahmoud, "which of the trays goes on board?"

"None whatever," replied Mustapha, carelessly, and the trays passed.

They proceeded rapidly for about five minutes, when there was a momentary halt to consign the scarlet-covered tray to the charge of a person waiting to escort it to a boat.

They then went on for a quarter of an hour at the same quick pace, when they were hailed, and the password being given, they entered apparently a deep and lofty arch, from thence through paved courts, passages, up steps, and along several apartments; at length they were carefully deposited on a carpeted floor; Mahmoud stooped and whispered to Lolah, and then departed with the bearers.

As soon as Lolah had extricated herself, she relieved Lavinia from her light imprisonment; they embraced in joy and thankfulness, and, on looking round, found themselves in a magnificent suite of apartments; slaves were in attendance, a bath was in readiness, the most superb dresses and jewels were displayed on the couches, and refreshments were prepared.

For the first hour or two Lavinia felt nothing but unalloyed happiness at her escape from the love of

Selymus, and the vengeance of Roxalana. The extraordinary change which had taken place in her destiny had been so sudden and unexpected ; the objects at stake, honour and life, were of such paramount importance, that no other thought but that of their immediate preservation, could present itself. When, however, the first excitement was over, and the mind of Lavinia began to calm and collect itself, a pensive expression gradually settled on her brow, and doubt and anxiety pervaded her thoughts.

She could not condemn herself for the step she had taken ; it was not only excusable, but justifiable in the position in which she was placed ; but she lamented its necessity. It seemed to her as though she had voluntarily thrown herself into the harem, (she shuddered at the word,) of the Turkish prince ; she was *bond fide* as much a captive here as at the seraglio, with this painful difference, that there she had been under female protection, and here she was not ; she felt that she depended entirely on the faith and honour of Mustapha : “ And on them I *do* place implicit confidence,” she internally exclaimed : “ so long as I keep a rigid watch over my own wayward heart, so long as I am worthy of his respect, it will be my shield. Those wild unbidden thoughts which have arisen here,” (pressing her hands to her bosom,) “ must here be buried for ever ! not a word, not a look, not the slightest emotion, must betray their existence ! Gratitude is all I may express : my final departure will be speedily arranged, and the struggle will soon be over.”

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Lolah observed the change in her mistress's mood, but with the unobtrusive submissiveness of an eastern dependant, she forbore to notice it by question or remark, wondering, however, at the same time, what she could possibly find to be melancholy about.

The apartments were scarcely lighted for the evening, when the approach of the prince was announced. Lolah rose to retire, but Lavinia signed to her to remain, while she herself advanced nearly to the entrance to receive her benefactor; as he entered she curtsied profoundly; he approached, and taking her by the hand, with a look full of joy, tenderness, and admiration, exclaimed "Lavinia!"

"My lord," she thus addressed him, "I know not how to express my thanks, my deep heart-felt gratitude for the inappreciable services which, *twice* in my life, it has been my fate to receive from your hands, and at your personal risk and peril!"

"Say nothing about them;—that is the best way of thanking me;" replied the prince, as he led her to the ottoman, near which Lolah was standing. "Ah! my old nurse, I am glad to see you here! This is your future home, and may your old age be as happy as I can make it!"

"May Allah bless thee, my gracious lord! my dear child! most mighty prince! my own nursling!" sobbed out poor Lolah, whose veneration for her prince was nearly overborne by her nurse's love for the child of her bosom.

"Enough, good Lolah! I will see you again soon,



but, for the moment, I wish to have some private conversation with this lady—you may retire.” Lolah looked at Lavinia, who after a moment’s reflection, bowed in assent, and Lolah departed.

“ You speak of your gratitude to me, Lavinia,” said the prince, seating himself by her side, and gently taking her hand, “ for the services I have been so fortunate as to have had it in my power to render you : you do not know, then, or you will not believe, that such power, so applied, I regard as the happiest circumstance of my life.”

“ I am quite sure,” replied Lavinia, withdrawing her hand, “ that the benevolent exercise of power has been and always will be to you, the highest enjoyment of existence. I have merely expressed what I warmly and sincerely feel. But, as we only make those on whom we confer great benefits, eager for more, so have I yet another boon to prefer.”

“ Speak it !” ejaculated Mustapha, with compressed lips and eyes cast to the ground.


“ That you will not lose a moment, my deliverer, in devising some plan for my secret removal from hence, in order to restore me to my country and my home :” she paused hesitatingly.

“ Any thing more ?” inquired Mustapha.

“ And that you will not deem me ungrateful,” (and she raised her eyes, filled with tears, to his,) “ if feeling, as I am sure you must, the peculiar delicacy of my situation under your roof, I pray you to abstain from visiting me more than necessity demands, and

then only in the presence of Lolah." It was with difficulty she got out these words, and although she gained somewhat of firmness as she proceeded, she trembled, and her heart beat almost audibly.

Mustapha smiled; "I understand you, Lavinia; but I am so unused to refinement and reserve in your sex, that I may unwittingly offend against them, and perhaps have already done so. It is, therefore, preferable," (he continued, gravely,) "that there should be a perfect understanding between us; my whole heart shall be opened to you, whatever may be the result. But mark me, Lavinia, I know of no set terms to court with; the whinings and sighings and mock self-abasement of your European lovers are not for me. You are young, lovely, and a woman; notwithstanding which, you are a rational being; it is to that nobler portion of your nature I chiefly address myself, when I tell you that I love you, that the impression made at your father's is indelible; that since then I have compared with you every woman I have met, and have turned away with pain and regret. You owe me some indemnification, Lavinia; for before I beheld you I was happy in my ignorance; beauty exercised its usual fascination, and during the short enthralment of my senses, my heart was free. But you have opened a new source of feeling, and it depends on you alone, whether its current turn to honey or to gall. Since my interview with Lolah, I have taken pains to obtain all the information possible regarding you; and, together with the details of your



capture, I have learned what you yourself are not aware of—the escape of your vessel from the brig left in charge; yes, she escaped by overpowering the too feeble and negligent guard placed in her; she made her way to Venice, where your fate has naturally excited much interest and commiseration. It has been decreed that, should you not appear within ten years, a portion of your property shall be divided amongst your dependants, and the remainder appropriated to the public service. Now speak but the word, Lavinia, and you shall be safely and immediately restored to your own country, where wealth, honour, and absolute choice in marriage, I presume, (so far as any female can command it,) await you. Here, what have I to offer? My sincere and ardent affection, proved in the only way it admits of proof, by marriage according to your rites and our own, and by its public acknowledgment on my succession to the throne. But, (for I will deceive you in nothing, Lavinia,) that succession is not so certain as it once appeared: the powerful influence of the artful and unprincipled Roxalana, and that of the Vizier, whom she has gained by the promise of her daughter, are at work to undermine me in the affections of my father, and to secure the succession to her own offspring. I hope and believe that she will not ultimately succeed, as, having become aware of her machinations, I am preparing to counteract them; but that they have already succeeded to a certain extent, I am unhappily but too well convinced from the cool, doubting, suspicious manner, in which I

was yesterday and to-day received by my father. All this I have thought it right to put you in possession of, that you may clearly perceive what you have to choose between. The throne of Solyman is a dazzling object ; but I have approached it too nearly not to perceive the cares and dangers that lurk around it ; between me and it there is yet a vast and dangerous gulf, and Allah only knows whether I shall ever clear it in safety. But, in the common course of events, I trust many, many years will intervene ere I am called to replace the glorious sovereign and affectionate father, who now fills it ! Thus, Lavinia, am I bold and selfish enough to require you to relinquish liberty for a luxurious prison, and safety for probable danger. All that I can promise is, that in the event of my imprisonment or death, such measures shall have been taken as will secure your immediate escape." He paused and looked at her ; she sat motionless, her hands clasped upon her lap, her eyes fixed on the ground, and pale as marble even to her lips. He felt discouraged, and with a deep sigh continued : "The more I dwell upon my proposition, and place it before your eyes and my own, the less just and reasonable, and the more hopeless it appears. I dread to hear your lips pronounce a negative ; think of all I have said for a day, and then send me your answer in writing." He rose as he concluded, and pressing her hand, turned from her with an air of deep dejection.

"My answer is ready," replied Lavinia, in a low but firm voice ; "I will give it you now." He started

convulsively, and turned again towards her ; her paleness had vanished, and a deep blush overspread every feature ; her eyes beamed with unusual brightness through the tears that yet trembled on their lids, and round her lips hovered a smile of joy and love : “Mustapha, I am thine ! in a prison or on a throne, through life and in death. Make me thy wedded wife.”

It was at a later hour during the same evening that the Sultana, veiled, muffled and unattended, glided through several darkened passages to meet the Vizier in a small and secluded apartment. As soon as he heard her step he prostrated himself, and during the interview remained in a crouching position, while she was seated on a small cushioned stool, the only furniture in the room, which was illumined by a feeble hand-lamp placed in a corner. “Have you given the letters from the Pashaws ?” she inquired.

“Your servant has given them,” was the answer, with a profound inclination. “And have they worked their effect ?”

“Well, madam, well : the Sultan read the first and second with a sullen brow, but as he proceeded he got heated, and at last angered. ‘It is well for my people,’ he exclaimed, ‘that my successor is so much to their taste ! These letters, Vizier,’ (and he smiled bitterly,) ‘are crammed with his praises, and protestations of attachment to him ; they would die for him ! would defend him to the last drop of their blood ! he is a paragon of virtue, generosity, and valour—wiser than the wisest of the sons of men, and

worthy to fill the throne of Solyman!—perhaps,’ continued the Sultan, ‘more worthy than Solyman himself—ha! may it not be so?—what say you, Vizier?’

“Upon this, madam, I poured the poison, drop by drop, into his ear. I was full of hesitation, fear and doubt,—apparently said not half I thought, nor told half I knew; ventured much in extenuation—in short, madam, if you can seize upon this moment, and strike while the iron is hot, our work is done.”

“Enough, Vizier; I feel it tends to its accomplishment. This fortunate day has also helped us on another step: the Italian slave has disappeared—the very morning after the prince’s arrival, and with his nurse Lolah. It is reported they were friends of old, when her father was Governor of Dalmatia, and he in command of the adjacent provinces. We can make up a tale of treacherous intercourse out of this, besides the flagrant violation of the sanctity of the harem in carrying off a female, especially one whom the Sultan, as well as myself, had destined for our eldest son.”

“Are you sure, madam, that such is the case?”

“Almost—I am certain that I have seized the right clue, and my spies are at work.”

“When does the review take place?”

“It commences after to-morrow; the encampment is almost completed; the tents of the Sultan and the prince are placed near each other; the prince’s, at his own request, is surrounded by his favourite troops. *Then* is our time, Vizier! then or never! Are *our* people prepared?”

“In a great degree, madam : hints have been thrown out that they are deemed unworthy to be classed with their more warlike brethren who have served with the prince ; men already begin to separate the names of the Sultan and his son, and to range themselves under one or the other standard. Our whole train is in good preparation, and much may be made of this incident of the Italian slave.”

“Leave that to me,” replied Roxalana, “it shall be made to tell to the utmost.” Having settled the time of their next meeting, she rose to retire ; when the Vizier approached her nearer, and bending one knee to the ground, ventured to whisper an inquiry for the royal maiden, his promised reward. “She is well,” replied the Sultana, “and sends you this,” drawing a rose from her girdle. The Vizier pressed it first to his forehead, then to his lips, and remained in the attitude of prostration until the light step of Roxalana could no longer be heard.

On the following morning early, Mustapha had a few minutes’ conversation with Lavinia, before he left his residence to attend the Sultan at the mosque and council, and to enter into all the pressing business of the day : “I fear, my beloved,” he exclaimed, as he folded her in his arms ; “I shall not be able to see you even for a moment during the day, not until the evening, the blessed evening which is to make you mine ! I shall have no difficulty about the arrangement requisite to perform the ceremony according to *our* rites, which are *very simple*, and in which religion has little share :

but as to our prisoner, the old christian priest, whom I have mentioned, I will break the matter to him, and then it will be better to forward him to you ; he will be here at noon, and can remain until the time required. He is an excellent worthy creature, a blessing to his fellow-prisoners, and attached and grateful to me. May our common Father in Heaven protect you, my love, until we meet again!" They embraced as though they were parting not for a day, but for a year, and with a struggle he tore himself away.

Lavinia was most happy but most anxious. The cup of felicity seemed wafted to her lips, not by a zephyr, but by a whirlwind. The brightest sunshine and the deepest gloom surrounded her ; love and joy basked in the one, fear and doubt lurked beneath the other. The announcement of the priest's arrival brought relief and hope.

A venerable man was ushered into her presence, with a countenance mild and benevolent, but on which the traces of affliction were deeply marked. As he entered, he threw off the long cloak in which he was enveloped, and appeared in the habit of his order ; a rosary depended from his girdle, and the cowl thrown back, discovered the tonsured crown with its circle of white hair. Lavinia knelt to receive his blessing, and its solemnity reached her heart ; he then led her to a seat : " I come, daughter, at the desire of the Prince Mustapha ; what have you to say to me ?" She entered into a rapid detail of all that had occurred from her first meeting with the prince to the present




moment ; acknowledged their attachment ; made known his generosity in leaving her fate to her own choice, and stated her decision.

After a few minutes' reflection, the father impressively replied : " The character of the Prince Mustapha is well known to me. If he were a Christian he would perhaps approach as nearly to perfection as is permitted to our infirm nature. It may be that the will of Heaven has selected you, my daughter, to accomplish this great event, that through him the good seed may be sown, and a whole nation may in due time be redeemed. God forbid that I should stand an obstacle in your path ! My lips shall pronounce the nuptial blessing—and may it prove the blessing of millions yet unborn !"

The rite of confession followed, and Lavinia remained listening to the advice, and joining in the devotions of the holy father.

Towards evening she arrayed herself, not as a Turkish bride, but in the white robes of a Christian maiden, and a wreath of snowy flowers bound her pure and innocent brow.

She sat alone in her cabinet, listening with a beating heart to every distant noise and approaching footstep : at length it came, that footstep !—the door was gently opened, and she was silently pressed to the heart of Mustapha ; he gazed upon her with passionate admiration, and then covering her with a veil, without a word, he bore rather than led her to an apartment, where the Turkish ceremonial was speedily concluded ; from



thence to another, where the Christian Priest awaited to unite and bless them.

When the attendants were about to retire for the night, it was reported to Lolah that one of the female slaves, who had been present at both ceremonials, was missing, but she judged it wise for the present to conceal this suspicious fact from her mistress.

On the following morning litters were prepared for Lavinia and Lolah to accompany the prince to the encampment, where they were to remain three days, during the period of the grand review.

At noon they arrived upon a spacious plain, at the head of which was the encampment. The Sultan's magnificent tent rose in the centre, and near to it, scarcely less magnificent, was that of the prince; the tents of the principal officers diverged from these two, to the right and left, forming a semi-circle; the rest were ranged in regular rows behind, the latter rows resting on the side of a hill, which bounded the plain in this direction.

Although carefully shrouded from view, Lavinia knew by the warlike buz about her, when they had reached their destination. The prince, who immediately preceded the litters, was received with the loudest acclamations, and a passage speedily cleared for him and his train. They were soon in the interior apartment of the tent, which was fitted up with every conceivable luxury, and where its young mistress was most tenderly welcomed. After a collation and the accustomed siesta, the prince prepared to meet the

Sultan in the plain, where various military games were to fill up the remainder of the day. Before leaving, he conducted his bride and her attendant to the outward apartment of the tent, where a large screen of light wire-work and thin gauze, removable at pleasure, permitted them to see all that was going forward, without themselves being seen. A splendid ottoman was placed for Lavinia; at some distance on a cushion, sat old Lolah cross-legged, and by permission smoking her little hookah; a few young slave girls crouching on the fine matting, which covered the verdant flooring, were enjoying in full glee and giggle, (just kept within bounds by the presence in which they sat,) the novel and interesting scene. The tent was surrounded by guards, and a few argus-eyed Nubians were sliding about, watchful on their duty.

On advancing close to the screen, Lavinia had a good view of the Sultan's tent; in front was drawn a screen similar to their own, and on looking attentively, she could perceive the outline of figures moving to and fro within, and the sound of female voices occasionally met her ear. She was informed that the ladies of the principal persons present had been invited by the Sultana to meet in her tent, during the three afternoons that the troops were to be assembled. Lavinia instinctively drew back, trembling to find herself so near her powerful and vindictive foe.

The regular review was not to take place until the following day, but the spectators were deeply interested by the various athletic exercises, on horse and

foot, which displayed the skill and strength of the numerous competitors. Here, for the first time, Lavinia beheld the Sultan; he was mounted on a superb steed, surrounded by his officers of state, moving about, conversing with affability, and appearing to take great interest in the games. She felt her heart yearn towards him, as she traced on his older and sterner features, a strong resemblance to those of his beloved son. After some time he approached very near to her tent, and appeared to view it thoughtfully; at this moment his attention was called to the prince Mustapha, who having been victorious at one of the games, approached to claim his reward. Lavinia felt surprised and shocked, to perceive that the countenance of the father assumed a sterner expression at the approach of his son, who was almost borne along on the shoulders of the soldiery, and cheered by deafening acclamations. Mustapha knelt at his father's stirrup, who, without a word, stooped and threw round his neck a golden chain, (the prize he had won,) then, without deigning him a look, turned and rode away to another part of the field, accompanied by his suite. A dead silence succeeded to the loud acclaims of the troops, and men amazed, regarded each other as if mutually to demand the cause of this phenomenon. Lavinia further observed that the prince Selymus, whose look had been frequently directed towards her tent, threw a triumphant and malignant glance at his brother, as he and his suite rode off to join the Sultan. Mustapha remounted, and surrounded by his officers, took up his

station not far from the tent ; but declined mixing any more in the games, remaining as a spectator only, his brow clouded with the expression rather of grief than of anger.

When the Sultan retired from the field on the approach of night, Mustapha despatched his principal officer with a humble request that his father would grant him a private audience. The answer was, that the Sultan was fatigued and was with his family, and could grant no audience that evening. A message was also communicated to the officer from the Sultana, who desired that he would express to the prince her surprise and regret, that his ladies had not joined the others in her tent, according to the invitation issued.

The prince returned to his bride with a heavy heart, but smiling countenance, careful to conceal from her all that might render her uneasy, perhaps, as he thought, unnecessarily so ; for although aware that intrigue was at work against him, and *that* in the quarter most to be dreaded, yet he knew not the length of time it had been undermining, nor the depth to which it had worked. He believed the Vizier to be his friend, and he had as little idea as the Sultan, that the numerous letters of late pouring in from the principal Pashaws and governors of provinces, had been promoted and encouraged by his enemies as a means of raising the jealousy of his father ; that the very acclaims of the multitude, natural and hearty in themselves, had been stimulated to excess by emissaries for the same purpose ; that not being able to avail themselves of any

vice in his principles or conduct, those enemies had, with consummate art, turned his very virtues against him. All this was unknown to him; the mine, which he imagined but just forming, was in fact ready to explode beneath his feet. Lavinia touched upon the subject, painfully impressed as she was by the cool reception he had met from the Sultan; but he parried her fears, and, in so doing, actually surmounted his own; and as she could not resist the influence imparted by the natural hopefulness and cheerfulness of his temper, she forgot, for the time, her anxiety, and a few more blessed hours were snatched from impending fate.

On the following morning, Mustapha renewed his solicitation for a private audience; the answer was that it should be granted after the review. "All our troubles are over!" exclaimed the prince, clasping Lavinia to his breast; "an hour's conversation with my father will undo every thread of this web of mischief. In regard to you, my Lavinia, I will confess all, and throw myself upon his mercy. Cheer up, my beloved!" he continued, gently wiping from either eye the large tear that stood ready to fall; "think only of our next happy meeting in a few short hours!"

"Shall I not see you again before the interview?"

"No, my love, I will not see you again, until I can chase every doubt and fear from your bosom."

"Then may our heavenly Father protect thee, my husband! Our fate is one.—*Thy* love would have bestowed a throne, but, if a grave be thy portion, *my* love shall share it with thee."

It was in vain that Lavinia, seating herself on the ottoman behind the screen, strove to fix her attention as during the previous day, on the scene before her. Her eyes wandered vacantly over the glittering mass of waving pennons, caparisoned steeds, and turbaned warriors; her ear received unconsciously the stirring notes of warlike music; the pageant wore the aspect of delusive mockery, and the trumpet vibrated like a funeral bell. It was in vain she struggled against the fearful presentiment,—against the instinctive assurance of evil, which “cast its shadow thus before.” The plumed turban of the prince occasionally glanced in sight, and she would follow it eagerly with her eyes until it again vanished amidst the mass; then, withdrawing her look and fixing it on the ground, she would relapse into melancholy, and sit motionless as a statue. She wished much for the presence of the christian priest, but in scenes like these he was not to be found. In spite of the pressing offers of the alarmed Lolah, she refused all refreshment, and finally, when the day was tending towards its close, withdrew to her own chamber within, and found the only alleviation to her distress in prayer.

On the conclusion of the review, Mustapha, with a beating heart, proceeded to the tent of the Sultan, and there dismissed his attendants. An officer of the guard appeared, and respectfully invited him to follow.

He was conducted into a small separate tent, the curtains of which were closed; the aperture where he entered was also immediately shut up, the officer re-

entering with him. By the dim twilight which, here and there, glimmered through the chinks, he could observe two gigantic forms standing in the centre: he approached, they diverged and prostrated themselves, then suddenly sprang to their feet. "Lo! my death!" were the only words he uttered, as he felt himself seized by one, while the action of the other denoted an attempt to fasten the bow-string; the instrument of death itself it was too dark to see. The moment the prince became aware of his situation, he released himself by a desperate effort from the strong grasp which held him, and a single blow sent his assailant staggering to the opposite side; he then rushed upon the other, when a pale light glanced suddenly through the tent, and he beheld the head of the Sultan protruded through an aperture, with clenched teeth, and eye-balls glaring with rage. For a moment he stood petrified, then slowly releasing the executioner, he bent submissively to his deluded parent, and stretched out his hands imploringly as he ejaculated the name of "Lavinia!" then baring his throat, presented it without a murmur to the fatal bow-string. In another minute all was dark and silent, and nought remained save the dead body of Mustapha.

That was a night of horror. The curtains of the tent were drawn up, and the body of the prince, with the face uncovered, was laid on a high and narrow couch, surrounded by the insignia of his rank, and by a semi-circle of motionless mutes, each bearing a flambeau. The tent was encircled by the body-guard of the



Sultan, with their scymitars glancing in the red and flickering light. Though all was in motion through the camp, a dead silence reigned, and men passed to and fro before the tent, looking in fearfully and mournfully; but the hand of death had struck at the same moment all the favourite officers of Mustapha, and none remained who dared think of revenge. A low wail of women rose from various tents, where lay the new-made corpse of a husband, a father, or a brother; but that melancholy sound was soon suddenly lost in one wild and piercing shriek, which rang with horrible clearness to every ear, and thrilled to every heart; it came nearer, and there was a movement, and a clash of arms, and a gathering rush made from all parts of the camp. In vain were scymitars crossed, and shields opposed; the light form of a young female, with hair and veil streaming to the wind, with dilated and tearless eye, with lip and cheek of livid paleness, flitted along as if unconscious of and impassible to all opposition. She reached the tent, and sprang to the couch, and looked at the body that lay on it. "Away with her!" exclaimed a few voices, but no one advanced to touch her. She shook back her hair, the blood returned to her cheek and lip, and the fire of her blue eyes shone like lightning, and she called out in the voice of an avenging angel: "Sultan, I summon thee! hide not thyself away in the folds of thy tent, or in the arms of thy blood-thirsty wife!—Slave of a slave, I call on thee, and thou hearest my call, and tremblest to thine heart's core!—The blood of thy godlike son is on thy hand, and

the curse of unborn generations on thy head ! The glory of thy race hath departed, and the greatness of thy people bows to the dust !” Then clasping her hands and looking upwards, she exclaimed, in a soft and fervent tone, while a smile of ineffable beauty pervaded every feature : “ I see thee, spirit of my beloved — lingering yet for me ! Behold, he smiles and beckons me ! Wait, wait !—I come—I come !” and as she spoke, she sank on the body, her head buried in its bosom. No mortal eye beheld the rapid change wrought by her bursting heart : one convulsive struggle alone was seen, —one agonizing groan was heard, and all was over !

*Rio de Janeiro,*  
*November, 1838.*

## THE SCYTHIAN GUEST.

When the master of a Scythian family died, he was placed in his state chariot, and carried to visit every one of his blood relations. Each of them gave him and his attendants a splendid feast, at which the dead man sat at the head of the table, and a piece of every thing was put on his plate. In the morning he continued his circuit. This round of visits generally occupied nearly forty days, and he was never buried till the whole number had elapsed. I have taken him at about six days old, when a little phosphoric light might play about his skin in the dark, and yet the corruption would not, in a cool country, have made any thing shapeless, or decidedly unpleasant. See Herodotus, *Melpomene*, 73.

### I.

THE feast is full, the guests are gay,  
 Though at his lance-illumin'd door  
 Still must the anxious master stay,  
 For, by the echoing river shore,  
 He hears the hot and hurrying beat  
 Of harnessed horses' flying feet,  
 And waits to watch, and yearns to greet  
 The coming of the brave.  
 Behold—like showers of silver sleet,  
 His lines of lances wind and wave :  
 He comes as he was wont to ride  
 By Hypanis' war-troubled tide,  
 When, like the west wind's sternest stoop,  
*Was the strength of his tempestuous troop,*

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And when their dark steeds' shadows swift  
Had crossed the current's foamless drift,  
The light of the river grew dazzled and dim,  
With the flash of the hair, and the flight of the limb.

## II.

He comes—urged on by shout and lash,  
His favourite courser flies ;  
There's phrenzy in its drooping dash,  
And sorrow in its eyes.  
Close on its hoofs the chariots crash,  
Their shook reins ring—their axles flash—  
The charioteers are wild and rash ;  
Panting and cloven, the swift air feels  
The red breath of the whirling wheels,  
Hissing with heat, and drunk with speed  
Of wild delight, that seems to feed  
Upon the fire of its own flying ;  
Yet he for whom they race is lying  
Motionless in his chariot, and still,  
Like one of weak desire or fettered will.  
Is it the sun-lulled sleep of weariness  
That weighs upon him ? Lo ! there is no stress  
Of slumber on his eyelids—some slow trance  
Seems dwelling on the darkness of his glance ;  
Its depth is quiet, and its keenness cold  
As an eagle's, quenched with lightning—the close fold  
Of his strong arms is listless, like the twine  
Of withered weeds along the waving line

Of flowing streams ; and o'er his face a strange  
Deep shadow is cast, which doth not move nor chang

## III.

At the known gate the coursers check,  
With panting breast and lowly neck ;  
From kingly group, from menial crowd,  
The cry of welcome rings aloud :  
It was not wont to be so weak,—  
Half a shout, and half a shriek,  
Mixed with the low, yet penetrating quiver  
Of constrained voices, such as creep  
Into cold words, when, dim and deep  
Beneath, the wild heart's death-like shiver  
Mocks at the message that the lips deliver.

## IV.

Doth he not hear ? Will he not wake ?  
That shout of welcome did not break,  
Even for an instant, on the trace  
Of the dark shadow o'er his face.  
Behold, his slaves in silence lift  
That frame so strong, those limbs so swift,  
Like a sick child's ; though half erect  
He rose when first his chariot checked,  
He fell—as leaves fall on the spot  
Where summer sun shall waken not  
The mingling of their veined sensation  
With the black earth's wormy desolation.

With stealthy tread, like those that dread  
To break the peace of sorrow's slumber,  
They move, whose martial force he led,  
Whose arms his passive limbs encumber :  
Through passage and port, through corridor and court,  
They hold their dark, slow-trodden track :  
Beneath that crouching figure's scowl  
The household dogs hang wildly back,  
With wrinkled lip, and hollow howl ;  
And on the mien of those they meet,  
Their presence passes, like the shadow  
Of the grey storm-cloud's swirling sheet,  
Along some soft sun-lighted meadow ;  
For those who smiled before they met,  
Have turned away to smile no more ;  
Even as they pass, their lips forget  
The words they wove—the hues they wore ;  
Even as they look, the eyes grow wet,  
That glanced most bright before !

## V.

The feast is ranged, the guests are met ;  
High on the central throne,  
That dark and voiceless Lord is set,  
And left alone.  
And the revel is loud among the crowd,  
As the laugh on surges free,  
Of their merry and multitudinous lips,  
When the fiery foamlight skims and skips,  
Along the sounding sea.

The wine is red and wildly shed,  
The wreathed jest is gaily sped,  
And the rush of their merriment rises aloof  
Into the shade of the ringing roof;  
And yet their cheeks look faint and dead,  
And their lips look pale and dry;  
In every heart there dwells a dread,  
And a trouble in every eye.


## VI.

For, sternly charmed, or strangely chill,  
That lonely Lord sits stiff and still,  
Far in the chamber gathered back  
Where the lamps are few, and the shadows are black;  
So that the strained eye scarce can guess  
At the fearful form of his quietness,  
And shrinks from what it cannot trace,  
Yet feels, is worse than even the error  
That veils, within that ghastly space,  
The shrouded form and shadowed face  
Of indistinct, unmoving terror.  
And the life and light of the atmosphere  
Are choked with mingled mist and fear,  
Something half substance and half thought,—  
A feeling, visibly inwrought  
Into the texture of the air;  
And though the fanned lamps flash and flare  
Among the other guests—by Him,  
They have grown narrow, and blue and dim,

And steady in their fire, as if  
Some frigid horror made them stiff. :  
Nor eye hath marked, nor ear hath heard  
That form, if once it breathed or stirred ;  
Though the dark revel's forcèd fits  
Penetrate where it sleeps and sits ;  
But this, their fevered glances mark  
Ever, for ever, calm and dark ;  
With lifeless hue, and changeless trace,  
That shadow dwells upon his face.

## VII.

It is not pain, nor passion, but a deep  
Incorporated darkness, like the sleep  
Of the lead-coloured anger of the ocean,  
When the heaven is fed with death, and its grey motion  
Over the waves, invisible—it seems  
Entangled with the flesh, till the faint gleams  
Of natural flush have withered like the light  
Of the keen morning, quenched with the close flight  
Of thunder ; and beneath that deadly veil,  
The coldness of the under-skin is pale  
And ghastly, and transparent as beneath  
Some midnight vapour's intertwined wreath  
Glares the green moonlight ; and a veined fire  
Seems throbbing through it, like a dim desire  
Felt through inanimation, of charmed life  
Struggling with strong sick pants of beaming strife,  
That wither and yet warm not :—through its veins,  
The quenched blood beats not, burns not, but dark stains





Of congealed blackness, on the cheek and brow,  
Lie indistinct amidst their frightful shade ;  
The breathless lips, like two thin flakes of snow,  
Gleam with wan lines, by some past agony made  
To set into the semblance of a smile,  
Such as strong-hearted men wear wildy, while  
Their souls are twined with torture ; calm and fixed,  
And yet distorted, as it could not be,  
Had not the chill with which it froze been mixed  
With twitching cords of some strong agony.  
And the white teeth gleam through the ghastly chasm  
Of that strange smile ; close clenched, as the last  
spasm

Of the wrung nerves has knit them ; could they move,  
They would gnash themselves to pieces : from above,  
The veiling shadow of the forehead falls,  
Yet, with an under-glare, the fixed balls  
Of the dark eyes gleam steadily, though not  
With any inward light, or under-thought,  
But casting back from their forgetful trance,  
To each who looks, the flash of his own glance ;  
So that each feels, of all assembled there,  
Fixed on himself, that strange and meaning glare  
Of eyes most motionless ; the long dark hair  
Hangs tangled o'er the faded features' gloom,  
Like withered weeds above a mouldering tomb,  
Matted in black decay ; the cold night-air  
Hath stirred them once or twice, even as despair  
Plays with the heart's worn chords, that last retain  
*Their sense of sorrow, and their pulse of pain.*

## VIII.

Yet strike, oh ! strike the chorded shell,  
And let the notes be low and skilled ;  
Perchance the words he loved so well,  
May thrill as once they thrilled.  
That deadened ear may still be true  
To the soft voice that once it knew ;  
And the throbs that beat below the heart,  
And the joys that burn above,  
Shall bid the light of laughter dart  
Along the lips of love.  
Alas ! those tones are all untold  
On ear and heart so closed and cold ;  
The slumber shall be sound—the night—how long !  
That will not own the power of smile or song ;  
Those lips of love may burn—his eyes are dim ;  
That voice of joy may wake, but not for him.

## IX.

The rushing wine, the rose's flush,  
Have crowned the goblet's glancing brim ;  
But who shall call the blossom's blush,  
Or bid the goblet flow for him ?  
For how shall thirst or hunger's heat,  
Attend the sunless track  
Towards the cool and calm retreat,  
From which his courser's flashing feet,  
Can never bear him back ?  
There, by the cold corpse-guarded hill,  
The shadows fall both broad and still ;

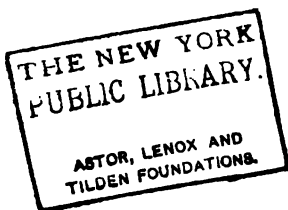
There shall they fall at night,—at noon,  
Nor own the day-star's warning,  
Grey shades, that move not with the moon,  
And perish not with morning.

## X.

Farewell, farewell, thou Presence pale !  
The bed is stretched where thou shouldst be ;  
The dawn may lift its crimson veil,  
It doth not breathe, nor burn for thee.  
The mien of might, the glance of light,  
That checked or cheered the war's career,  
Are dreadless in the fiery fight,  
Are dreadful only *here*.  
Exulting Hatred, red and rife,  
May smile to mark thine altered brow ;  
There are but those who loved in life,  
Who fear thee, now.  
Farewell, farewell, thou Presence pale !  
The couch is near where thou shouldst be ;  
Thy troops of Death have donned their mail,  
And wait and watch for thee.

J. R.

*Christ Church,  
Oxford.*









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## EGYPT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "PROVOST OF BRUGES," &c.

EGYPT! — What a crowd of strange thoughts does the very name call up! Egypt—the land of science and of art, when Greece was yet unknown, and Rome slumbered an invisible embryo in the distant future. Egypt—whose antiquities smile at all other memorials the world retains, and look coldly on them as but things of yesterday. Egypt—that was a country and a people ere Israel arose, and when Abraham journeyed to Mizraim.

Marvellous land! Where are thy coævals? They are names alone. Where are their cities? "Babylon is heaps"—mounds of earth and pools of water alone tell where she stood. But thy monuments over whose granite heads thousands of years have rolled, still frown in giant strength on the beholder, and strike down that scepticism which else might call thy chronicled story but a fairy fable or a dream!

Thebes! The Hecatompyles, the city of a hundred gates, through each of which she could send forth two hundred chariots and twenty thousand fighting men—



the walled city whose extent was three-and-twenty miles! Who would believe the tale did it rest on the words of history alone? But who shall deny any greatness recorded of her, who shews us, at this hour, her mighty bones, as it were, to vouch the vastness of her giant frame?

Strange people of the land! What were ye? Did ye live ere Time had yet his charter sealed complete, that thus ye have mocked his destroying power, and handed down, not your temples only, not your sculptures, your statues, your paintings alone, but your very bodies to meet our wondering gaze this day?

Mysterious priesthood! What was your worship—what were your rites, your traditions? They are sculptured in the imperishable stone, they are written in the papyri that lie spread before me. But who shall read them? There are the mystic characters, clear and defined, though three thousand years have rolled away since they were writ; but the language itself is lost, and they rest like some deep spell, the key to which has vanished with the mighty Magus who alone possessed it.

What though the ingenious study and research of years may have succeeded in decyphering a few known or unknown names and unmeaning titles! The histories that lie writ in your venerable scrolls, are as dark, as fathomless as ever.

Enough, enough!—The brain grows dizzy with the search, and baffled curiosity droops, oppressed and *stified* in your rayless caverns. Let us revisit the

upper air and contemplate the marvels which still lie open to our unforbidden gaze.

The very country resembles no other on the earth's surface. Two ridges of hills wall in a narrow strip of land five hundred miles in length, and, except where it joins the Mediterranean, seldom more than ten, and sometimes not even two miles, in breadth. There, fruitful to a degree that scarcely asks the aid of cultivation, it lies a garden bounded on both sides by a barren desert, and through its centre runs the mighty and mysterious Nile, without one feeder, without one tributary stream through all its course; self-supplied, self-existent, and solitary; originating probably in the minds of the inhabitants that feeling of "oneness" which led them to carve every column, every obelisk, every statue, however enormous, from one single stone.

And why does Egypt bloom a garden in the wilderness? Behold its single cause, the Nile! Well might the dwellers on its banks regard it as a holy thing. A purer and more enlightened faith can scarcely look without awe on this mighty instrument in the Almighty hand for the provision of his creatures. The soil of Egypt is like that of the surrounding desert, sand. The rains of heaven visit it not, or so seldom and so scantily that the few drops sink unfelt, and unregarded; nature droops and pines, famine stares in her face, desolation spreads her wing and hovers over her victim. What shall save them? The Nile heaves her broad bosom! No cause is visible, but her pitying waters rise; slowly they spread over her margin,

and gently they overflow the surrounding lands. The thirsty soil is satisfied, it drinks the precious draught till it is full. She pauses, and from her saturated waters deposits the rich alluvial mould, the very food that vegetation needs; then, like a benefactor who has bestowed his gift, slowly and smilingly she retires again to her accustomed channel. The grateful husbandman comes forth and scatters the seed on the surface, and soon the abundant harvest smiles amid the waste.

But when the fruits of the earth are gathered in, the vertical sun of that cloudless sky again dries up the land; again the parched soil splits and reverts to its original sand, and desolation seems to have regained her lost empire; when the beneficent stream again pours forth her waters, and life is respited, for another year.

Before the enlightenment of modern philosophy had traced the cause of these periodical inundations to the heavy summer rains that drench the mountains of Abyssinia, with what perplexed amazement this phenomenon was beheld, may readily be imagined. Man, never satisfied with the mere possession of a blessing, unless he can also dive to the secret source of its bestowal; made early and strenuous efforts to unravel this mystery.

The stream was ascended far and amid many opposing difficulties, but still it rolled the same in its solitary grandeur; till, with curiosity baffled, and ardour wearied, the explorers cried that the river descended from

heaven itself, and gave up the search. And though the zeal of modern inquiry enabled Bruce to pass the bounds allotted to all previous travellers, the outraged spirit of the flood, indignant at this intrusion on his sacred haunt, appears to have wetted his lips as the Delphic god did those of Cassandra, and when on his return he spoke, none believed him. And though, since the traveller no longer lives to enjoy his triumph, the tale of his journey is now received as true, still all agree that he followed the wrong branch of the stream and that the true source of the Nile remains yet unexplored.

Such as the river is, such are the monuments that crowd its banks—vast, single, and their origin unknown ; and the marvel is increased when we regard these giant masses but as the works of men of our own stature and dimensions, (for we can look upon the very bodies of their builders)—nay, unless the mummies are much shrunken in their dimensions, (a belief which the close adherence of the asphaltum, and the bandages forbids), of men even below the common stature of the present day. Were it not for this evidence before our eyes, we might believe that Belzoni's impressions represented but the truth, when he says, describing his approach to Thebes, "It appeared to me like entering a city of giants, who, after a long conflict were all destroyed, leaving the ruins of their various temples, as the only proofs of their former existence !"

Herodotus, the father of history, visited Egypt about two thousand four hundred years ago, and it was then

in its glory. Much that he saw has yielded to the action of time ; and modern scepticism loves to doubt old stories. But of Egypt, what is impossible ? Shall we reject as incredible that which we no longer see ? Then why shall not future ages laugh to scorn the travellers of this our day, who find still in that wondrous land, obelisks of eighty, and seated statues of more than sixty feet high, each formed of a single stone, and erected on a bed of sand, often hundreds of miles from the quarries where they grew ? Shall not these in that day pass equally for exaggerations ?

To talk of the pyramids were idle. They are now “familiar in our mouths as household words ;” but what stretch of imagination can take in the enormous Labyrinth, described as having contained three thousand chambers, one of which was fifty feet high, and fifteen hundred feet long ; or the Palace of the Cataracts with its six thousand giant columns. Let incredulity deduct what it will, to reduce the relation within the limits of its narrow belief ; let it halve, quarter the numbers if it please, and still, in the grudged and stinted remainder what masses are left, to crush the architecture of the modern world !

Look to their Colossi. These rest on the authority of no mere ancient record. A traveller of our own day, Belzoni, has given their exact dimensions. View the four figures he describes, seated side by side in front of the excavated temple of Ipsambul ; each, of them, though seated, measuring sixty-four feet to the top of his cap. Picture to yourself a statue, whose arm

from the shoulder to the elbow, measures fifteen feet and a half, the ear three feet and a half, and the chest, across the shoulders twenty-five feet four inches ! Yet the great sphynx is half as large again as these ! Why the heads our national museum contains, shrink into pigmies ; they appear to have belonged merely to the *children* of the giants, to be *portable* images only !

And think not these enormous remains to have been but a few extraordinary embellishments of some favoured spot. No, they exist throughout the country, they are found everywhere—the land groans under them, and they are lavished with a prodigality that seems to have accounted of labour as nothing. The approach to one temple at Thebes, is formed by an avenue of Sphynxes sixty-three feet wide and about three thousand feet in length ; yet the figures in each line stand but twelve feet apart.

Then the people of the wondrous land,—might we not think we traced in them a corresponding elevation of thought and feeling, when we read the inscriptions on a temple of Isis—" I am all that has been, is, or will be ; and no mortal has ever lifted my veil ;" but that we find them, deprived of the light of revelation, giving their worship at the same time to oxen, cats, beetles, leeks, and onions ! Surely no other proof of the truth of God's own teaching of the Israelites can be needed by him, who reflects that through the whole of the ancient world, however wise, however distinguished for learning, for science, or for art, they stood alone in the worship of one invisible, eternal, omniscient, om-

nipresent God ; invested with no attribute unworthy of His greatness, disguised under no image of His perishable creation. This faith, the reason of the most fastidious must admit to be pure, holy, and befitting its object, while from the polytheism of every other nation, the eye of common sense turns with ridicule or disgust away.

These objects of the ancient Egyptian worship are said to have been introduced by one of the early kings, who, finding his subjects for ever engaged in conspiracies against his power, resolved to give them occupation among themselves. For this purpose he declared one animal or vegetable sacred in one province, and a different one in another. This being received, universal jealousy and discord soon arose ; for who could endure to see the cow he worshipped led to the slaughter, or the leek he adored thrust into a pot of vulgar porridge ? Egypt was filled with internal broils, but the king reigned in quiet. He had found out the maxim “divide et impera” before the Roman !

Yet how wise, how excellent, how awe-inspiring were many of their customs. The coffin carried round in the festivals when mirth was degenerating into riot, and revelry into licence ; with the soul-recalling words, “Behold ! such shalt thou soon be !” and the judgment of the dead on the threshold of the sepulchre, when the various acts of their lives were related, and if the evil predominated, or if the defunct died in debt, the corpse was denied the rites of burial, by *them* esteemed the most sacred of all. Indeed the

very importance of the funeral rites led sometimes to what would in our day be considered a strange profanation of the dead. For a son, in want of ready money, and having no other security to offer, would leave his father's corpse with his creditor; but this pledge was so sacred that its redemption was certain; and if impracticable by the borrower, devolved on his children and their descendants, who would grudge no labour or privation to get their forefather out of pawn.

Their mythology, too, before it merged into that of Greece and Rome, had much of the sublime and awful. What were the unmeaning powers of Medusa's head, compared with the agony of the widowed Isis on the discovery of her murdered husband's mangled remains; when her shriek killed one child, and her glance of wild horror, another. Here, too, we find the origin of the Greek Proteus; and his various changes of figure are nothing more than the variety of forms (of the head) under which the Egyptians symbolized the different qualities of the same king.

Their laws of division of labour might interest our modern economists. Here we are told that the practice of each physician was confined to one complaint only, which he was bound to treat according to the method prescribed by law. If he failed, the law only was to blame, and he escaped unharmed; but if, stung with the desire of innovation and improvement, he departed from the established mode of treatment, he did it *periculo suo*, and was liable to answer with his life in the event of failure, for his presumption in having



endeavoured to be more wise than his predecessors. Oh ! modern mediciner, bless thy fate, thou didst not live in Egypt in those days, for if thou hadst, thou wouldst assuredly have been — dead ere now !

In like manner we are told every sculptor was limited in the exercise of his art to one particular portion of the body only ; and thus, as the son was always obliged to follow the occupation of his father, one family devoted itself to the carving of heads, (and these no doubt were at the top of their profession in every sense) another of arms, another legs, then hands, feet, &c.

We know that the fondness of modern admiration would deny this ; nay, would fain persuade us of the existence of a beauty in Egyptian sculpture little inferior to that of Greece ; but we confess we fully believe the old account, first because the enormous magnitude of the figures forbids the idea of one man executing the whole, and would of itself suggest the propriety of dividing out the work into portions, in each of which the artist would naturally be considered most expert who had given his undivided attention to that one particular member ; and next, because we can on no other ground comprehend how those, capable of producing such really fine and elaborate heads as most of the figures possess, could join them to such ungainly bodies, and such execrable hands and feet.

But as for beauty of form, we honestly confess we find it not, and never could persuade ourself to the *discovery* of it. The grandeur which results from

unrivalled size, the awe inspired by calm unvaried repose, the labour which could achieve so much with the hardest materials (for many of the stones defy the edge of modern tools), and the exquisite finish given to their works, especially the smaller ones,—these are the true merits of Egyptian sculpture, nor need it seek for others. But the ill-formed muscle-less limbs, the constrained monotonous attitudes,—if standing, the legs straight and close together, and the arms and hands equally straight, and pressed equally close to the sides, or stiffly crossed in front — or if seated, the legs closed as before, with the thighs at a right angle with the body, and the legs at a right angle with the thighs, the arms following the same line, and the open palms resting a little above the knee ; all this we confess appears to us the very reverse of grace and beauty, and we attribute it solely to the practice of carving from a single block of stone, which it will readily be seen would most easily accommodate itself to these attitudes, and would, indeed, render any freer disposition of the limbs almost impracticable. In their reliefs and intaglios, the action, being no longer impeded by these mechanical obstacles, is far more varied ; but still the figures are unanatomical and graceless in the extreme.

Some of the legends of ancient Egypt bear a surprisingly strong resemblance to those of the Arabs of a later period. Take for example the story of Remphis. This monarch was the victim of a passion not even yet extinct in the world—the love of amassing wealth ;

and savings banks and compound interest being inventions of a later day, with which he was unacquainted, he could think of nothing better than to build a strong treasure-house, with but one entrance, of which he himself kept the key. But for this building he was unluckily obliged to employ an architect; who, being a cunning rogue, made an entrance for himself as well as one for his master, which was formed by a stone so accurately fitted, that the most minute search would fail to discover it. The architect, however, was a prudent man, and took care to use his privilege with such moderation that his abstractions were never noticed.

But on his death, his two sons, to whom he imparted the valuable secret, lacking their father's prudence, like hot-headed youths as they were, helped themselves so largely and so frequently, that the royal treasure diminished perceptibly. This puzzled the good king sorely. He searched the building throughout, but not so much as a mouse was to be found, nor even a chink by which one could enter. He sealed the door with his own signet; the seal remained unbroken, yet the gold continued to decrease. Resolved, however, to ascertain and secure the thief, he placed traps round the coffers, and when next the unsuspecting brothers entered—snap! and one of them was caught fast!

Finding his release impossible, he addressed his companion, "Dear brother, my death is inevitable, but your security may yet be provided for. I charge you by the memory of our father, obey my words."

The other promised compliance, and the prisoner proceeded. "First, help me to remove my clothes." It was done. "Now kiss me, dearest brother." Long and affectionate was the embrace. "And now cut off my head, and carry that and the clothes clear away together."

This injunction was startling enough; but really there was so much good sense in the scheme, that after a proper amount of remonstrance, the one still free prepared to obey it. He again tenderly embraced his dear relative, and then, with a single blow of his sword, severed his head from his body; and packing it up carefully with the discarded garments, helped himself to a treble amount of gold,—for sorrow should never make us improvident,—and took his departure.

In the morning Remphis came to see the success of his plan. Great was his wonderment when he found the thief indeed taken, but where was his head? That necessary material for identification was gone,—vanished! He had a naked corpse, indeed; but not a rag of dress, not a token of any description was left to assist him in forming the slightest guess who the visitor had been. His treasure, too, was dipped into more deeply than ever.

Satisfied, from these signs, that there must have been an accomplice, the king set himself to work in earnest to discover this daring culprit. Many were his stratagems, many his toils; but the cunning of the offender foiled them all, and by means so inconceivable to the monarch's wit, that at length, tortured by

curiosity, and his anger at the knave's daring lost in admiration of his dexterity, he publicly promised the thief a free pardon, and his daughter in marriage ! Hereupon the culprit came forward. He was graciously received, all that had been promised was conferred upon him, and he became a valuable and faithful servant of the king, as governor of one of the provinces.

Alas ! for poor Egypt ! many a change has passed over her since those days of glory. The Persian, the Greek, the Roman, the Arab, and the Turk, have in turn over-run and ruled her fertile plain. The descendants of the original inhabitants are a scanty, oppressed, and insignificant fraction, dispersed in scattered villages, and their number estimated at about a hundred and fifty thousand, out of a population of two millions and a half. These, the Copts, are Christians, and their tradition is that the Gospel was introduced into Egypt by St. Mark. They are described as a reserved, morose race, inaccessible to strangers ; but little allowance appears to be made for the mental bitterness likely to be produced by centuries of slavery in their own land, with the imperishable monuments of their forefathers' greatness for ever before their eyes.

The people, the faith, the rulers, are all changed ; the cities scattered in ruins, the temples overthrown, the monuments half buried in sand. One feature alone remains on which Time's hand has marked no furrow, — the mighty river — the Nile !

*"Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now!"*

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The exquisite little engraving which embellishes, and which has called forth, this long and rambling paper, represents a portion of the site of ancient Thebes, during the period of the overflowing of the river. The scene is full of interest. Four distant villages are now scattered over the ground where once the city stood. Two of these are here visible. On the right is Medinet-Abou, and in the central distance, a little to the left, is Luxor, with its magnificent temple. The two obelisks at the entrance of the latter are the most perfect now existing, and are each about eighty feet in height, and monoliths (or formed of a single stone.)

The two enormous seated figures seen rising out of the water to the left of the plate, each about fifty-six feet high, are, or rather were, also monoliths ; for one of them (the northernmost) was long since broken in halves by an earthquake, and is described by Strabo, who visited it, as consisting of the lower half of the figure only. It has since been restored, though at what period is unknown ; but more modern art has only been able, by a succession of many layers of stone, to restore the half of that figure, of which the whole was originally formed of one.

But what, perhaps, gives this statue its greatest interest, is the fact that this is the real

“ *Memnon's* broken image, sounding  
Tuneful 'midst desolation, still.”

We say, the fact, for after the circumstantial account of

Strabo, referring the sound (not very musical indeed) to the broken Colossus of the two seated side by side, we can scarcely find room for a doubt.\*

To complete the picture, by the strange union of the past and the present, we have, on the right, a group of Cangias, or Nile boats, shading by their sails, from the evening sun, a party of Mooslims, the modern rulers of the soil, who are regaling, in Turkish festivity, to the sound of the Ood, or Egyptian guitar; while to the left are the aborigines of the land, half naked, or in rags, toiling under their antique urns, filled with the precious waters of the stream.

Soon the sun shall sink, and night shall brood in her stillness and her beauty over the silent scene; and then in the midnight solitude shall the spirit of the place arise and spread his dusky wings; while to meditation's ear his voice shall sound, —

Land of the mighty who have passed away,  
 Preach to those pigmy creatures of a day!  
 Drive your stern moral through each thoughtless breast,  
 And bid presumptuous folly veil his crest;  
 See at his feet Time's choicest trophies spread,  
 But Heaven, in undimmed glory o'er his head! —  
 In vain, in vain! The laugh is still as loud,  
 Vice still as bold, ambition still as proud;  
 No ear is touched, no trembling heart is stirred,  
 Thy call unanswered rests, thy voice unheard!

\* We hardly dare trust our readers with the uneuphonious modern names of these statues—Tammy and Shammy.

## THE INVITATION.

Come, come with me ! I have found a spot  
Where the struggle and care of the world are not :  
A fairy spot, where nothing brings  
The anxious thought of outward things ;  
But the heart, like a sleeping infant, seems  
To smile in the light of its wordless dreams.  
It is a spot where over head  
The forest beech and the elm-tree spread  
Their feathered branches ; while below  
Long tufted waving grasses grow,  
And unnamed weeds, that interlace  
Their varied leaves, with tangled grace ;  
While tiny flowers peep out between  
The meshes of their netted screen :  
Pale, gentle flowers of modest dye,  
Like household virtues, coy retiring,  
Unenvious of the world's admiring ;



But paying well the curious eye  
That bends observant of their worth,  
To call their timid beauties forth.

Then come with me!

There, through the boughs, in sportive play,  
The sunbeams strive to force their way,  
And fall, half baffled, to the ground  
Where light and shade lie shivered round :  
And there the green-scaled beetle walks  
Through the tall forest of the stalks ;  
And there the glittering fly alights  
To trim his wing for distant flights ;  
And soon, his simple toilet done,  
Shoots back into the joyous sun.  
There, through the matted leaves, is heard  
The twittering of the nestled bird ;  
While near, her mate pours loud and strong  
His broken burst of raptured song.  
And there a little splashing brook  
Comes bubbling from a shadowed nook,  
And spreads its waters, till they make  
The semblance of a fairy lake,  
In which the mirrored earth and sky  
Their own bright images espy ;  
Until some wanton breeze shall pass,  
And, mischief-loving, shake the glass ;  
Lest beauty, too much rapture raising,  
Should, like Narcissus, die of gazing !

Oh, come with me !

#### THE INVITATION.

I have not told a soul the place ;  
I would not other feet than ours  
That nook of loveliness should trace,  
And desecrate those silent bowers.  
The heedless step, the careless eye,  
The look that glanced and wandered by,  
Would pain my heart with such a wound  
As sacrilege to holy ground !  
For in that solitary glade,  
As stretched I lay beneath the shade,  
It seemed as to my soul 'twere given  
To bathe itself in dews of heaven.  
The troubled earth had passed away,  
A dream, without a trace remaining ;  
Or rather, 'twas that earlier day  
Ere sin and sorrow found their way  
To the new world, its brightness staining ;  
And I was in that land of bliss  
The Adam of the Paradise !  
An Adam with a vacant breast,  
That craved one joy to make it blest :  
For what were Eden's valleys fair  
To him or me—till Eve was there ?  
Then come with me !

Nay do not smile, and feign to think  
Youth's sunny spring is past for us ;  
Nor say that years have dulled the link,  
The shining link that binds us thus :

But come with me, and thou shalt hear  
The vow that won thy maiden ear  
Echo so true its early strain,  
Thou shalt become a girl again !  
Again be wooed, again be won,  
And start to find what years are gone !  
But look thou do not bring with thee  
Those boisterous rogues that climb thy knee :  
That spot is kept for thee alone ;  
Their laughing voices' merry tone  
Would scare its wordless charm, and chase  
The brooding spirit of the place.  
Enough for them the flowery lea,  
The sunny empire of the bee,—  
The springy turf, the sloping hill ;  
There let them bound and shout their fill.  
But thou and I will woo apart  
The thoughtful rapture of the heart,  
That bears it from the clods of earth  
To the bright heaven of its birth.

Then come with me !

Yet, oh ! it is a fearful thing  
That thus the very soul should cling  
Around a being of the clay  
That passes ere the passing day !  
To store in such a brittle urn  
The oil from which our lamp must burn !  
Thorns pierce the rosy chaplet through,  
And he who loves must tremble too.

It is a thing for anxious fear,  
It is a thing for restless dread ;  
What unseen perils hover near !  
How weak is that sustaining thread !  
It is a thing for ceaseless prayer,  
Lest earth rob heaven of its part ;  
And passion only prove a snare  
To raise an idol in the heart.  
Come then with me, my gentle guide,  
A warning angel by my side ;  
Restrain the wayward steps that err,  
My watchful guard, my counsellor.

Oh, come with me !

G. W. L.

## THE DOCTOR'S TWO PATIENTS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE REFORMER."

THE Doctor had made a long round ; he was tired to death, and the worst of the matter was that all these foolish patients had real maladies ; not the imaginary fantastical complaints of the rich, who are ill because they have leisure, but the positive substantial maladies of the poor.

Now, as these troublesome patients were really afflicted with the long catalogue of ills that flesh is heir to, and as our young doctor was very foolishly unlike a great many of his wiser brethren, he felt himself unable to miss them, or forget them, or cut them altogether ; and as one disagreeable consequence generally comes pretty closely on the heels of another, it of course came to pass that as all his patients were poor, the doctor himself was not very rich ; and thus again it followed that he was obliged to resort to that primitive mode of conveying himself about, the fashion of

which was first set by Adam;—we mean that the doctor not being able to afford a carriage, or a cab, or a stanhope, or a tilbury, was obliged to carry himself.

Now on the morning in question, the doctor had carried himself till he was thoroughly tired of his burden, and he came home weary and worn, and though not complaining, just within a few degrees of the danger of doing so.

"Two new patients, sir, that want you directly," said the doctor's assistant.

"Will not to-morrow morning do?" asked the young doctor, as he looked at his own arm-chair by the fire, and that fire a good one, his slippers most invitingly ready for his feet, the table spread for his dinner—"Will not to-morrow morning do?"

"I believe not, sir,—they seemed urgent."

"But if people only scratch a finger, or happen to sneeze, the doctor must come on his peril, without a moment's delay. Did you ask what was the matter?"

"The lady has a fever, sir; and the man—"

"The *lady* and the *man*—oh, then the lady *is* a lady, and the man is only a man. Ah, I understand; they are of different conditions."

"You could leave the man till to-morrow, sir?"

"Could I?—and suppose he should die to-night."

Now, though our doctor had fairly and honestly earned a right to a little rest, having most thoroughly tired himself in his vocation, the foolish sort of conscience of which we have already spoken as forming

one of the component parts of his character, would not allow him to discard his boots, or plunge into the comfort of his easy chair ; so breaking off a corner of a crust, and giving one last longing lingering look to his cheerful fire, he summoned up all his resolution, and once more ventured forth into the rain and the mud.

The doctor made his nearest patient his first: it happened to be the lady.

The evening was darkening, and the gas growing brighter, when our doctor lifted the knocker of a sort of shabby genteel house in one of those ambiguous streets of which it is impossible to say whether they are within or without the pale of polite toleration ; the difficulty arising from their standing just on the line where gentility ends and vulgarity begins, and being in fact the worst of the best, or the best of the worst, nobody being able to decide which, excepting the inhabitants, and they can give a positive opinion, because they know that the street, wherever it may happen to stand, is second only to Grosvenor Square. Our doctor's summons was answered by a maid of the same nondescript character. The inside of the house was in exact keeping with its external countenance ; the furniture and arrangements being all of a similar class of shabby gentility, and our hero saw at a glance, that it was "Lodgings to Let."

The apartment into which he was ushered looked sufficiently uncomfortable ; there were marks in the fire-place that there had once been a fire, but it might

have been a week ago for any symptoms which appeared to the contrary. Our doctor felt the gloom of the place, but when he was shown into the adjoining room the scene was still more desolate. A faint untrimmed lamp burning low in its socket, emitted flickering flashes of light over the apartment just sufficient to show a woman in the middle of life, burning with fever, and raving with delirium, lying on a bed, and a girl, the perfect image of fear and misery, weeping over her.

The doctor sat down by the side of that solitary bed, and proceeded to speak of hope and comfort, and the young nurse dried her tears, and listened to his words as if they had been syllabled by an angel.

"You are not alone?" asked the doctor.

"Yes," replied the girl, with a sorrowful shake of the head.

"It is not fit you should continue so. Had you not better send for some friend to share your vigils?"

Fresh tears came into the young girl's eyes as she answered, "We have no friends—at least none in this great town—if anywhere."

"Are you strangers in town?"

"We have been here only a month."

"And have you really no connections in town?"

"No; Mamma came on law business."

"And are you sole nurse?"

"We are alone," replied the girl, "alone in the world."

"The people of the house—"



"Are afraid of coming near us. They dread infection—it is natural."

"May I send you a nurse?"

The girl again shook her head.

The doctor *felt* rather than saw that pecuniary difficulties were the objection.

"You will not be able to endure much more fatigue," and the doctor looked on her flushed cheeks, her bloodshot eyes, and her evident exhaustion.

"Yes, I can endure anything: you have strengthened me with hope."

"But to-night will be an anxious night—a crisis in this disorder; and in the midst of fever and delirium, I am obliged to warn you—it is not right that you should be left unsupported."

"You know that she will die!" exclaimed the girl, and in a paroxysm of frantic grief she threw herself upon her knees by the bed-side, hiding her face in its folds, and clutching handfulls of its drapery in her convulsive grasp.

"I have already told you," said the doctor, "that I do not know it, that I do not even think it; but certainly something better than the indulgence of a childish sorrow is imperatively called for."

The girl rose up again with an offended air notwithstanding her grief. "I shall do all that I can do."

"And I shall do the same," replied the doctor.

Our doctor went from that shabby genteel house to one of much less doubtful aspect; it was so thoroughly and perfectly miserable that no one in his

senses could shut his eyes on its wretchedness and desolation.

It was now quite dark, and the streets were like the black sea, perfectly fluid with mire and mud. Not a light glimmered in the obscure court into which our doctor entered, for the commissioners of lighting and paving left the one to the moon, and the other to the mud, and as the moon happened to be absent on other duty, it required some courage and perseverance on Mr. Kendrick's part to steer himself into the farthest extremity of the court, and up three pairs of stairs into a back attic, where he at length found his patient.

Alas ! alas ! that these bodies of ours should be the avenues of so much misery. Not a nerve of this corporeal frame but opens a channel to suffering — not an atom that may not vibrate with agony !

Very dreary and desolate was that miserable chamber — the fitting scene for human suffering. Not a spark of fire to lighten the aspect of its squalid poverty ; a deal table, a chair with broken spindles and a worn-out rush bottom, and a truckle bed were all its garniture ; and on that bed was lying the second patient.

Our doctor drew the rickety chair close to him, and sat down. A wretched rushlight made the darkness visible, and cast its pale light on the features of the miserable man ; he was cadaverous and attenuated ; his features almost incredibly sharp and thin ; a pair of wild but faded eyes, deep sunken in their sockets, shot out fierce glances of anger and suspicion ; lowering shaggy eyebrows, a bald forehead, and a few

white locks on either side, completed the picture. The expression of his countenance was that of distrust and fear and fretfulness.

"And who are you?" exclaimed the sick man starting fiercely as the doctor took his station by his bed-side; "Who are you?"

"I have come to see if I can do you any good," replied the doctor, in soothing tones.

"Good! no! nobody can do me any good!"

"You must not be so sure of that. It is worth the trial."

"Sure! yes, I am sure! I suppose you are a doctor. I want no doctors! they kill more than they cure. Don't waste your time here."

"I shall not think it wasted if I can be of any service to you."

"There, go away,—go away—I hate your whole tribe! Leeches! Bloodsuckers!"

"Well, even they are good things in their way—doctor may be so too in his way," replied Mr. Kendrick, good-naturedly.

"Better out of the way," grumbled the impatient patient.

"Have you tried them?" asked the doctor.

"No, nor intend it."

"Then you condemn in ignorance; a wise man ought not to do so."

"Hark ye, sir," exclaimed the sick man, raising himself upon his elbow, with a look of fierce exultation, as though what he was about to say were quit

unanswerable; "Hark ye, sir; the poor are bad patients for your tribe. Look round this room; do you think a broker would give five shillings for all that it contains?"

"Probably not," replied Mr. Kendrick.

"Ha! ha!—and where do you think the money would come from to pay your long bills? No, no; go away, go away. You would never get paid; you see that you never would get paid."

"I am willing to give up the expectation; but that is no reason why I should leave you to die."

"But if you never get paid, what does it matter to you whether I live or die?"

"If I had never seen you or known of your existence—nothing; but having seen you, I am bound to my own conscience to do all that I can do for you."

"Without getting paid?" screamed the patient, "without getting paid?"

"That does not affect my responsibility. I think I can do you some good—it is *my* duty to try—it is *yours* to let me."

"Try, then," grumbled the sick man.

\* \* \* \* \*

The doctor went home, but not to the enjoyment of his dinner, his easy chair, his slippers, or his good fire; it was only to make preparations for the care of his two new patients.

Another hour had made a wonderful difference in the aspect of affairs. Mr. Kendrick had managed, in that time, to surround his poor patient with a few com-

forts; had sent him a blanket, procured him the cheering advantage of a fire, had given him medicine, and what was equally necessary, nutritious food.

Neither had he been less careful of his other patient. There he had himself administered medicine, himself smoothed the sick pillow, and seen all that was needful duly done.

And never was kindness and support more craved for than in that sick chamber. The girl, totally unused to depend upon herself, and in a situation that would have tried the strongest fortitude, sat by the bed-side of her mother, who was raving with delirium, almost paralyzed with terror. They were evidently strangers, unknowing and unknown. There was not a relative or friend to share her toil, or cheer or sustain her under it. Our doctor, however, sanctioned by his profession, became both nurse and comforter, and by that immutable law which makes the weak lean upon the strong, he was, under God, her trust, her strength, her oracle.

Three days,—three days of unspeakable anxiety and terror to poor Esther, followed. Alas! the heavy weight of moments, that seemed hours—of hours, that seemed days—of days, that seemed years. Poor Esther's bloodshot eyes, her pallid lips, her fainting frame, bore witness to the flagging spirit; but our doctor's cheering voice, his strength of mind, and his consoling courage still sustained her. By a gentle but a firm compulsion, he had made her at intervals take an hour's rest upon the sofa in the adjoining room, whilst he assumed her

station by the bed-side. In his calm, kind, and authoritative voice he had ordered her to take needful food, and she had obeyed him like a child. When she grew frantic, he reproved ; when she despaired he consoled. Oh ! profession, too noble for man, — office rather of an angel, to be the instrument of binding up the broken heart, of snatching life from the grasp of death, of giving to the mother the child, to the husband the wife, the loved one to the loving ; shame that thy offices should ever be filled with a sordid priesthood !

We have said that three days of the bitterest anxiety had passed ; the fourth brought with it better hopes. The delirium had abated, the fever was allayed, and Mrs. Heathcote lay weak and motionless, but memory and comprehension had resumed their functions.

But memory and comprehension, though they served to re-assure poor Esther's spirits, by seeming to give her back the identity of her living parent, brought with them but little solace to the sufferer, for with them came the remembrance of those anxieties which had been in fact the occasion of her maladies, and our doctor found, what he had before more than suspected, that his own bill was not quite as " safe as the Bank of England."

The doctor's other patient lay with his head half raised from his pillow, supported by his hand, striving to catch the first echo of his footsteps on the stairs.

" Another half hour gone, and not here yet !" said the poor patient, his glistening eyes fastened on the door,

—"another half hour. Has he forgotten me, or has something happened?"

The clock of a neighbouring church struck the hour. "One—two—three, and not here yet! Hark! that is the street door! No, psha! what a fool I am to expect him thus—and yet his is the only kind voice that has sounded in my ears these last twenty years. Who was ever kind to me since the day my mother wept over me, and kissed me, and—died? Who ever saw anything in me since the day that her love left me, but a miserable, ungainly, miserly clod?" and the old man wiped from his glistening eyes a tear. While he was yet speaking, our doctor entered his lonely chamber, with so light a step, that the patient was not at first aware of his presence.

"Well, old friend," said the doctor, cheerily, "how are we to-day?—nay, what is this?" as the old man's eyes, suffused with their unwonted moisture, met his own. "What is this? what has gone wrong? what has happened?"

"It was a tear," replied the old man, "a tear to the memory of my mother. She alone, of all the millions of beings in this wide world, ever loved me, and a sudden remembrance (I often think of her in the unquiet night), brought the tear into my eye."

"A mother's love is an unfathomable well," replied the doctor with a sigh, "but I never knew it."

"Then you have never known the dearest love on earth," replied the sick man, fixing his eyes commiseratingly upon him.

The doctor shook off his sentiment, and with a slight laugh said, "Oh, the *dearest* say you—are you sure of that?"

The patient fixed his eyes searchingly upon him. "So, then, you are thinking of marrying. That will quite ruin you—quite spoil you."

"No, no," replied the doctor, with another slight laugh, but this time it was a constrained one. "No, no; I must make my fortune first. I am too poor to marry."

"But you are not poor! you are not poor!" reiterated the sick man.

"And not very likely ever to be rich," replied the doctor.

"Not if you are so extravagant," answered the sick man; "you have torn that good piece of white paper all to pieces."

"It was only what your medicine was wrapped in," responded the doctor, as he extracted the cork from the bottle, and presented its contents to his patient.

"It would have done for another bottle if you had not destroyed it," replied the careful man: "there, now, you have thrown the cork into the fire,—that is sheer waste: and pray, while I think of it, do you want the bottles back again?"

"No; let them go with the paper and the corks."

"No, no, I shall sell them; depend upon it, nothing is wasted here; and, by the way, will you buy them? You doctors give rather better prices than the marines."



"I must refer you to my assistant; I never interfere with that part of the business myself."

"Then I don't wonder that you are not over-rich: and pray, why do you waste your time upon me?"

"I repeat, that I do not call it wasted time, if I can do you any good."

"But I warned you in the beginning that you would never get paid; and in fact I never sent for you; I am not responsible. It was the people of the house."

"No matter who it was; I am here."

"But you can go, and you need not come back again," replied the old man, querulously; "you are not the parish doctor, I believe, and if you are, you can send your apprentice."

"Come, come," said the doctor, kindly, "you have got some fresh crotchet in your brain: pray, drive it out again."

"If you had rich patients instead of poor ones," resumed the old man, "you would soon be rich yourself, and let the poor die. What are they better worth? They do nothing but encumber the earth; they pester the happy with their complaints; they will murmur and murmur; they will not starve in quietness, but the voice of their misery is heard mingling with the revelry of the rich. There, go, leave me; let me die—alone like a dog. Let me turn my face to the wall, and die."

And so saying, the old man turned himself angrily away from his visitor.

"You can have the blanket back again," he continued; "it is not much the worse; but you'll have the washing to pay for,—that's your own fault! Why did you send it? and the broth, and the jelly?—I didn't ask for them; that must be your own loss too, and it will teach you better another time."

The old man paused, expecting a reply; but the doctor remained quite silent, so the patient turned himself over once more, and found that Mr. Kendrick had seated himself very quietly in his old rickety chair.

"What, not gone yet?" exclaimed the old man, petulantly, "I thought I told you to go."

"Yes, but then I should have had the trouble of coming back again; so I thought I had better wait until you were reasonable, hoping that it would be soon, and that I should save time."

"Reasonable!" repeated the old man. "Is it unreasonable to want nothing?"

"But you want strength and help, or at least I want them for you."

"And I shall die!" exclaimed the old man. "I feel that I am sinking into my grave."

"You feel exhausted because you have been long deprived of proper nourishment."

"And where was I to get it? Where was I to get it?"

"The past is gone from us all," replied the doctor; "let us make the best of the present. Be calm and peaceful, and take such things as I send you."

Another rush of painful feelings came over the old man's face ;—a sort of convulsive working of the features like the breaking up of a stony nature ; and the doctor left his poor patient with fresh tears gathered in his sad wild sunken eyes.

\* \* \* \* \*

But sorrow is not confined to the lowest abodes of poverty ; wherever man fixes his dwelling, there the shadow falls.

So the doctor found the footsteps of this foe to our race, (ungrateful that we are, is it not a friend though a friend in disguise ?) in the dwelling of his other patient. He found *Mrs.* Heathcote propped up in bed with pillows, the coverlet strewn over with parchments and ominous-looking papers, diffusing the effluvia of a lawyer's office, and the sick woman feverish again with anxiety and excitement, and poor Esther pale and tearful sitting at her pillow.

"This is treason," said our doctor ; "actual treason ! You ought not to bestow even a thought on business."

The poor thin woman drew up her wasted neck with an air of great dignity, and said, "It is the advantage of people in mediocrity to be exempt from engrossing cares. They mind their daily business ; those of elevated station are absorbed in higher cares."

"Then mediocrity has the best chance of health," said the doctor.

"Sir, we have a lawsuit pending," said the lady

with increased dignity. "It will now be speedily decided, and I shall soon recover health and strength."

"Or lose them," thought the doctor.

"I shall then go down to my country seat—one of my country seats—on which, I have not yet decided; but I shall of course consult you, as you fill the station of my medical adviser. After this suit is settled, I shall have my choice of two princely dwellings."

"Or none at all," thought the doctor.

"And I shall be most happy to recommend you," continued the lady,—“most happy indeed, though I could wish that you resided in a rather more aristocratic neighbourhood.”

"I thought," said our doctor, turning rather reproachfully to Esther, "I thought that I had enjoined a careful suppression of everything that could excite or agitate."

"My dear doctor," said the invalid lady; "I know that you deserve our perfect candour. Do not chide Miss Heathcote. These papers and letters have been accumulating during my illness, and they required immediate attention. Our long delayed suit will be decided this day fortnight, but there were preliminaries—"

"Come," said the doctor, assuming a cheerfulness of tone and manner which he did not quite feel; "my profession makes me very tyrannical. I have an antipathy to my brethren of the law, and I must both justify my own authority and satisfy my spleen against them, by thus sweeping away all their musty figments;

and I am bound to maintain that all the skins and parchments that ever were engrossed, are worthless compared with a single drop of my elixirs."

And so saying, the doctor swept away the whole mass of papers with an air between playfulness and authority; and Esther gathering them up, said with something between a smile and a sigh, "Your kindness is the true elixir."

"Esther speaks truly," said the mother. "You have been very kind to us, and we trust that we shall repay you as we ought. Kindness and attention shown to one of our house were never wont to go unrewarded."

"Mamma means," said the girl with a deep flush passing over her face, "that we must always repay (if that is the right word) your great kindness to us with unceasing gratitude."

"I mean more than that, girl!" said the haughty mother: "I mean that services so freely rendered shall be as freely paid, and not with a niggardly hand. We, who can trace our ancestry to kings, ought not, when we are served, to requite like churls and beggars."

Now we are bound to acknowledge that our doctor was just two or three grades below perfection; and this little trifling alloy or adulteration brought the slightest shade of wounded pride across his brow. It is almost humiliating to reflect that services worthy of an angel's ministering, must yet be repaid with silver and gold:—but our doctor caught a deprecating glance

from Esther's eyes, and the shade passed away from his own brow.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Are you mad?" exclaimed the doctor to his other patient, on his next visit: "are you mad?"

He found him out of bed, dressed, with his hat and stick, apparently intending to go out.

"I have a right to do what I like," replied the man, sullenly.

"That, indeed, you have not, when you like to do what is foolish and imprudent."

"I did not send for you," retorted the wayward patient. "You have no right to dictate to me. I shall do as I please."

"Then, perhaps, you will please to take off your hat and shoes, and return to bed."

"I am going out," replied the man, doggedly.

"Going out! certainly not with my permission."

"I can go without it."

"How long have you been confined to your bed? let me see —"

"Three months; and I say that after such a confinement it would be a very hard case if I could not once more see the outside of the house."

The doctor pointed to the window. Sleet and snow were drifting past in clouds borne on a cutting-wind, that seemed to sever all that it passed. "Do you see the weather?"

"Yes, and in sixty winters many times as much. If you don't like it, why don't you keep your carriage?"

said the patient, with a sneer, "you would not feel it then."

"Simply because I think it advisable first to keep myself."

"Why don't you spend an hour over your fingers every morning, and put on two or three rings set with brilliants, and wear perfumes and fine white French cambric handkerchiefs, and have your hair in curls, and speak in a soft condoling insinuating voice, and so ingratiate yourself with the women? They are fools enough."

"Thank you, I prefer my hands, and my hair, and my clothes all in their present fashion."

"Then why don't you become a sloven, and go for a week without washing your hands, and turn up your sleeve-cuffs to show them, and have your hair cut once a-year, and never have your clothes brushed, and snap every body up that speaks to you, and tell them to order their coffins: they would be sure to die of fear if you frightened them well, and that would establish your reputation; and then you might carry all before you with the men."

"Simply because I don't choose to be a brute."

"Well, you can do as you please, and I can do the same."

"Excepting going out."

"And that is the only thing I care for doing."

"You will kill yourself."

"All the better for you."

"You will seriously disoblige me."

"I am sure you do not care a jot whether I live or die."

The doctor looked rather injured.

"I hope I have shown as much solicitude for you as for my most wealthy patient."

"You mean to reproach me with my obligations!"

"Come, come," said the doctor, resuming his good-humour, "the whole of the matter is, that you cannot, and shall not go out."

"What shall hinder me?" asked the old man.

"Your own good sense."

"That says, go."

"No, indeed, that could not be your good sense. You mistook the voice: it was only caprice that spoke," said the doctor, playfully.

"I am not to be bantered out of it."

"I spoke of a reason, not of a jest."

"And I have a reason, a great reason for going."

"And I have a reason, a great reason,—nay, an enormous reason for keeping you at home."

"I won't be chained up like a dog, and jested with like a child. I'm not crying for a toy. I *will* go."

"I see," said the doctor, "that I entirely mistook the nature of your complaint. I ought to have ordered you a strait-waistcoat."

"It seems that you have provided me a keeper."

"Then you will not let me call myself your friend."

"*Friend!*" exclaimed the old man, as though his ears were startled at the unwonted sound. "*Friend!* have I a friend in the world?"



"I am trying to prove to you that you have ; but you know that the offices of friendship should be mutual."

"Mutual ! what do you expect from me ? what have I to give you ? Shall I die and bequeath to you these rags, and this mockery of furniture ?"

"I am wishing to prolong your life, not to hasten your death."

"Or, perhaps, you think I have a large freehold estate, and look for some reversionary acres, or ships full of rich merchandise, or exchequer bills, or diamonds."

"Now it is your turn to jest."

"And if none of these, what can buy you to me for a friend ?"

"These things could not buy me ; but you have far stronger claims upon me."

"What are they ?"

"Sickness and sorrow."

"And do these, which disgust and frighten all the rest of the world, make you my friend ?"

"I am trying to prove myself such ; but as I told you before, the offices of friendship should be mutual."

"You mean that I should obey you like a slave."

"No, I mean that you should oblige me like a friend."

"Do with me what you please !" cried the sick man, and abandoning all his opposition and his acrimony, he submitted like a child to the wishes of our doctor, who taking immediate advantage of his relenting humour, saw him once more with his head upon his

pillow, and left him, as he believed, composed and peaceful. Scarcely, however, had he descended the dirty crooked battered stairs before the old man, pertinacious in his purpose, had again raised himself from his recumbent posture, resumed his tattered garments, his unsound shoes, and his beaverless hat, and having first carefully locked his room-door, staggered after him, clinging to the banisters, and muttering as he went.

Our doctor paid his visit the ensuing day unsuspecting of what had happened. He had not yet grown callous in the course of his profession, and he was shocked to find his patient with the last sands of life fast falling through the glass.

"I am dying!" said the old man, "I am dying, and you are the only being in this wide world who has shown kindness to the destitute old man. You said that you were my friend, and that the offices of friendship were mutual. You have discharged them well, and I, little as you might expect it, I have done something on my part. You have thought me poor, but you were wrong. I was only miserly. I had nothing to love, neither wife, nor child, nor friend, nor kindred, —and so because we must love something, I began to make a treasure — a god, if you will — of gold; it was because I had nothing else to love. Ay, you little thought you were paying court to the rich old miser, instead of showing charity to the poor old beggar. But — stoop lower, my breath fails me. Take this packet," and he gave him a small parcel wrapped in the identical piece of torn paper which he had re-

proached him for wasting. "Take it—it is yours. I went to the Bank yesterday to make a transfer — into your name. There take them—they are bank receipts *I have saved you the legacy duty !*"

\* \* \* \* \*

The fortnight that had stood between Mrs. Heathcote and the possession of her fortune, that is, the decision of her law-suit, which she considered the same thing, had gone to the tomb of the Capulets. On that day our doctor was guilty of the sin of neglecting his patients : he remained at home all the day.

The evening at last came. Mr. Kendrick took his hat ; it was covered with deep crape. Mr. Kendrick had lost his poor patient, and was the richer by more than twenty thousand pounds.

He found Mrs. Heathcote in hysterics on the sofa, her head-dress disordered, her cheeks stained with tears, and Esther by her side trying to console her. He saw in a moment that the suit was lost.

Now we do not mean to impugn our doctor's kindness of heart, but certainly the distress which he witnessed brought a flush of pleasure over his countenance ; however quickly assuming his own professional face, he sat down and began to exercise his province of giving advice.

And what was his advice ? Gentle reader, it was neither more nor less than this ; namely, that Mrs. Heathcote should increase her connections (that was rather technical) by taking the doctor himself for son-in-law ; and as her castles in the country had turned

out to be castles in the air, that she should content herself with a more mundane abode, and take up her residence in his house, although he confessed it was only built of such vulgar materials as bricks and mortar.

And did the lady of a line of kings so condescend ? She did, and Esther was nothing loth, nay, even rejoiced at the exchange ;—and so a Wife and a Fortune were both found in “ The Doctor's Two Patients.”

## THE RIVALS.

I SAW an old man, a gray old man —  
He sat on a mossy stone,  
While the world's swift current before him ran  
But he sat and watched it alone.  
Grimly he smiled, and all the joy  
Of his dull life seemed to be,  
Hope's pictures of beauty to mar and destroy  
Oh! that old man pleased not me.

There was a city, stately and fair;  
He waved his withered hand,  
When a moment laid its foundations bare,  
And showed that they only were built on air  
And the city could not stand.  
Young flowers of spring were budding nigh,  
And bright was the promise they bore;  
But his pointed finger revealed to the eye  
A canker in every core.  
And Beauty was there, in her loveliest grace  
But a touch of the old man's art  
Showed, lurking beneath the smiling face,  
A cold and a hollow heart.

Then I turned that old man's name to crave,  
And they called him "Experience" sage and grave.

I saw a boy, a laughing boy,  
His face was heavenly fair,  
And his sparkling eye danced bright with joy  
As he shook his sunny hair.  
A waste and a dreary desert spread  
Where the old man's art had been ;  
But beneath the stripling's lightsome tread  
Each flower again raised up its head,  
And all was fresh and green.  
New walls arose, as lofty as they  
Whose foundations had crumbled and melted away ;  
And beauty's daughters a loveliness wore  
As bright and as stainless as ever before.  
Sweet child ! I cried,—with this power divine,  
Let me be a follower ever of thine.

The cruel old man, with a frown severe,  
Touched the spot where the boy was treading ;  
And the poor child wept a bitter tear,  
As he saw his blossoms fading.  
But short was the triumph, short and vain,—  
For, in spite of each cold endeavour,  
The boy on their ruins built up again  
His bower as bright as ever !  
Then I asked his name, and the people smiled,—  
It was " Expectation," young Hope's child.

And so, from the day of the world's first birth,

Those two have been striving together ;

And Expectation has brightened the earth

With blossoms of beauty and seeming worth,

Which Experience touches to wither !

Each has his train of followers true ;

The one has the sad and wise,

And the other the young and ardent crew,

Whose hearts are still moist with the early dew

That drops from the morning skies.

Yet, which is the better, sweet child, to be

Triumphant with him, or deceived with thee ?

If knowledge is sorrow, then is it not madness

To yield the warm heart to its stony encrusting ?

If hope's airy dreams are an innocent gladness,

Oh ! where is the soul shall grow weary of trusting ?

Say 'tis but a dream—shall I ask for the aching,

The coldness and care that attend upon waking ?

No ! rosy winged phantom, bright child of the skies,

On thy glittering pinion in fancy I'll rise ;

And should old Experience ruffle my pillow,

To rouse me again to the storm and the billow,

From thy fairy influence sooner than sever,

I'll seal up my eyes, and lie dreaming for ever !

G. W. L.

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## THE ALHAMBRA.

**THERE are times when nations lie,  
Dying ; without power to die.  
When the native fire is cold ;  
When the bold no more are bold ;  
When a long and leaden spell  
Seems the heart of heart to quell ;  
When the great, the proud, the brave  
Following, like an ebbing wave,  
One by one, forsake the land,  
Leaving all, a naked strand !**

**Still, the ruin is not yet :  
Suns and seasons rise and set ;  
Still rolls on the human stream,  
Lingers still the heavy dream.  
Like the clouds in April skies,  
Danger seems to come, and flies ;  
Like the shattered mountain stone,  
Plunging in the lake, and gone ;  
Like the arrow through the air,  
Past, we know not how, nor where.**

Then, when man is doubly blind,  
Chance the idol of mankind ;  
Then the ripened hour is come,  
Then is tolled the knell of doom.  
Faction rends the land in sunder—  
All is frenzy fear and wonder ;  
Shapes of folly and of feud,  
Things of burning and of blood ;  
Thoughts perplexed, like serpents twined,  
Sweep and flame before the mind.  
Then, the vengeance rushes all,  
Like the midnight thunder-ball,  
While the world but stands at gaze,  
Scorched and blinded by the blaze.

Old Alhambra, in thy grove  
Moorish kings no longer rove,  
Listening to the golden lute,  
Gazing at the fairy foot,  
That, to its delicious sound,  
Seemed on viewless wings to bound.  
O'er yon sculptured battlement  
Turbaned brows no more are bent ;  
Warrior forms, with flashing eyes,  
Cheeks, of damask roses' dyes ;  
Gazing where the evening glow  
Gilds the palace pomp below,  
Halls of pearl and amethyst  
By the sinking glory kist ;



Listening where the purple vale  
Breathes its music in the gale ;  
Sounds of mirth and nature blending,  
In one wild sweet chaunt ascending ;—  
Echoes of the cataract  
Bursting from its mountain tract ;  
Echoes of the crowded camp,  
Harnessed charger's neigh and stamp,  
Thunders of the atabal\*  
Answering the trumpet's call ;  
And the city's twilight hum  
Seems from depths unseen to come  
Sinking, swelling, on the breeze ;  
Now like sounds of summer bees ;  
Now with intermitting roar,  
Wild as ocean on the shore :  
All are gone, — all are gone :  
All is silence, — all is stone.

Old Alhambra, wild and grand,  
Thou art emblem of the land ;  
Even thy palace but a tomb,  
Weeds alone around thee bloom ;  
In thee but the worm is fed,  
Beauty lives, but soul is fled.  
Spain, O, melancholy Spain !  
Taunted, tortured, all but slain ;

\* The great Moorish drum.

Shalt thou linger, but to feel  
The trappings of the robber's heel?  
Shall thy gallant heart be gored  
By the parricidal sword,  
With but pulse enough to know  
The last shame of overthrow;  
With but life enough to drain  
The last quintessence of pain?

Wake thou land of lethargy!  
Fix on Heaven thy flashing eye!  
Spurn the monk, the idol scorn!  
Be thou like the babe new born!  
Be but thy heart regenerate —  
Be holy,—from that hour thou'rt great.  
Be faith thy helmet, sword and shield,  
Then fear no more by flood or field;  
Thy pangs all healed, thy sins forgiven,  
Champion at once, and child, of Heaven.

ARION.

## LETTERS FROM THE OTHER WORLD.

### *An Oriental Legend.*

WHEN Alexander invaded Northern India, he found that country subject to one of the most powerful and wisest monarchs that ever wielded the destinies of a nation. Phúr, or as the Greeks called him, Porus, had established his supremacy over all the princes of Hindústan. The Persian and Indian Oceans secured two sides of his dominions, a chain of lofty mountains and trackless deserts protected his northern frontier ; he was only vulnerable through the province that bordered Persia, and it was on this side that he encountered the conqueror of Asia. Alexander, to whom victory had been awarded by the irresistible decrees of Providence, conquered Phúr, but instead of depriving him of his dominions, he made him his ally, and annexed to his empire several valuable provinces west of the Indus. Phúr survived his benefactor many years ; at his death he bequeathed his dominions to his son Phúr-Zadeh, a prince of a benevolent disposition, but wanting the firmness which would en-

able him to resist the seduction of flattery, and the wisdom requisite to detect the schemes of courtiers.

It was fortunate for Phúr-Zadeh under these circumstances, that he had a vizier trained in his father's policy, and anxious to continue the system of enlightened administration which had brought happiness and prosperity to India. Omad had been originally in the service of the last Darawesh or Darius of Persia; he had endeavoured to dissuade that unfortunate monarch from demanding the Macedonian tribute, and thus provoking the resentment of Alexander; his sage advice had been rewarded with confiscation and exile, and he had sought a refuge with the sovereign of India. Phúr soon became acquainted with Omad's merits; he raised him to the highest dignities of the state, and persuaded Phúr-Zadeh to place his son, prince Palal, in the vizier's household, that he might receive early instruction in the art of government. Omad's conduct amply justified the confidence that had been reposed in him. It was he that negotiated the treaty with Alexander by which Phúr's dominions had been so greatly enlarged; it was by his prudence that the southern provinces of India were induced to forget their jealousy of northern rule, and submit to a yoke which, though light, was inconsistent with ancient pride and prejudice. Phúr-Zadeh had as much reason to be satisfied as his father; peace and prosperity prevailed through his ample dominions; to use the words of a Persian historian, "the rich enjoyed their luxuries and the poor their comforts." While his natural he

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nevolence was gratified by witnessing the happiness of his subjects, the paternal feelings of the monarch were even more delighted by the results of the education of prince Palak. To the refinements which Omad had introduced from the polished court of Persia, the prince added the bravery of an Indian hero ; his valour had been proved in several expeditions against the wild tribes of the northern mountains, and his political skill no less demonstrated by the wisdom of the terms on which he granted peace to the vanquished. He was also a poet of no ordinary skill ; his hymns were sung by the priests in the temples, his war-songs were the delight of the soldiers in the camp, but dearer to himself were the strains in which he celebrated the charms of Radamika, the beautiful daughter of his preceptor.

The prince's passion for the daughter of a foreigner, though approved by his father and sanctioned by the approbation of the great bulk of the people, gave offence to several powerful classes. As a matter of course it was disapproved by all the Hindú ladies in the empire, and they had recourse to the usual expedient of criticising her style of beauty. Radamika was tall—all of a lower size called her a walking pine :—her face was oval, — they said it was like a horse-shoe :—her dark lustrous eyes were declared void of intelligence,—the mild expression of her countenance was voted tame and spiritless :—the exquisite symmetry of her form was asserted to remind beholders of a doll ; and the brilliancy of her conversation was held



as conclusive proof that she would turn out a scold. These and a countless number of other depreciating charges were daily repeated, but unfortunately for the efficacy of female criticism, they were laughed to scorn.

The resistance of the Brahmins was more formidable : they declared that Omad was not an Arya of pure blood, and they predicted countless misfortunes to the empire if the sanctity of the royal race should be impaired by intermarriage with a M'lecha, or barbarian. They cited hundreds of ancient prophecies to support their views, and thousands of omens and prodigies were proved, by the infallible testimony of holy men, to have appeared as warnings to Phúr-Zadeh and Palak.

Scarcely less dangerous was the jealousy with which all the courtiers regarded the influence of Omad : far from attributing his elevation to his superior genius, there was not a nobleman round the court who did not think himself fully qualified for the post of vizier, and who consequently did not regard its occupation by a foreigner as a personal insult. Numerous plans were laid to entrap Omad in some delinquency which might be made the ground of a charge ; but as the sage Lokman declares, " No man goes astray on a straight road ;" his unswerving integrity rendered him secure, and the accusations recoiled on the heads of his adversaries.

Omad was too wise to despise his enemies ; he sent for prince Palak, and pointed out to him the dangers to which he was exposed by his passion for Radamika. The young prince mocked at peril. " Beware of too

much confidence," said the vizier; "mean foes are sometimes more to be dreaded than those of high degree; it was the sting of a wasp that blinded the eagle."

"But what can the miserable detractors effect?" exclaimed Palak; "my father is anxious to reward your merits by raising your lovely daughter to the rank of a princess; a nation grateful for the blessings of your government, waits to testify its thanks in the joyous shouts of a marriage festival; and every man of sense laughs at the idle omens and prodigies of which our priests are prating."

"And how many men of sense," said Omad, "are in India? But I will summon Radamika herself to tell you of signs that threaten dangers to us all."

He left the apartment, and the prince, catching up a lute, sang one of those brief snatches of song with which Eastern lovers greet their mistresses:

Thou art graceful, my love, as yon branch of palm,  
That waves in the sky, though the air is calm;  
But thou wilt not bend, like the palm-branch free,  
It is I — it is I — who must bow to thee.

The last note had not ceased to quiver on the string, when Radamika entered the apartment; she was only partially veiled, and Palak could discern on her countenance the trace of recent tears.

"Light of my soul, what aileth thee?" said Palak, in his anxiety omitting the usual forms of salutation.

"Prince," she replied, "heaven and earth are leagued against our union; the oracles speak the will

of our foes ; dark omens confirm their threats, and the priests have declared that the dread Siva demands my life."

" When, or how was this ?" shrieked Palak.

" I will answer," said Omad entering : " the chief of the Brahmins has this morning declared that portents of coming evil have been seen, evil which can only be averted by a self-sacrifice of the maiden to whom Siva will send the sign of his choice. I have secret information that there is a plot for making the sign point at my house ; and should this happen, my daughter will prefer death to dishonour."

" It shall not happen while I live," furiously exclaimed Palak ; " I will myself go to the Brahmin's house ; I will tell him that his base artifice is known, and he will dread my wrath. Fear nothing, adored Radamika. There is not a priest among them that would dare to provoke the vengeance of Palak."

The lady suffered herself to be consoled by her lover ; but Omad could not disguise from himself that malice, working by the means of superstition and bigotry, was not easy to be overcome, and he urged the prince to take speedy measures of precaution.

Great was the consternation in the college of Brahmins when Palak entered and briefly narrated the details of the plot which they had so cunningly contrived. The chief Brahmin denied it but faintly ; terrified however by the prince's menaces, he vowed that he would never attempt anything against the safety

of Radamika ; and as a proof of his sincerity, there was a report of more favourable omens on that very evening.

A revolt in the north-eastern provinces soon required the prince's presence in the field. Scarcely had he departed, when mysterious rumours were circulated of dangers that threatened the vizier's family from the anger of offended deities. One of the priests whom Omad employed as a spy, informed him that a female attendant had been bribed to poison Radamika, and that the priests would represent her death as a punishment from on high, and use the circumstances to extend their influence with the people. Omad adopted a perilous course ; he allowed the traitorous domestic to prepare the poisoned viands and bear them to his daughter's chamber ; he followed her, accompanied by two faithful slaves, and compelled her to take the deadly dose herself. The wretched woman sank in terrible convulsions, her shrieks were heard through the whole of the vizier's palace, and when she died her distorted limbs and features scarcely retained the form of humanity. The corpse was hastily arrayed in Radamika's robes, and Omad having secreted his daughter, rushed out with dishevelled robes, bewailing in piteous accents the loss of his only child. The body of the slave was borne to the tomb, while Radamika was conveyed in disguise to a sequestered valley, until circumstances should assume a more favourable aspect.

"No fraud is innocent," says the Eastern sage,

“every deception is a plague to the inventor.” The supposed fate of Radamika, the blight of her beauty, and the exaggerated stories told of the horrid aspect of the corpse, produced a very pernicious effect on the weak mind of Phúr-Zadeh; he became the passive slave of the priests, and though his personal attachment to Omad was unshaken, he disregarded the advice of one whom he believed to have incurred the wrath of the divinities. Omad was disconcerted by this unexpected turn of affairs; he had many years before caused a subterraneous passage to be excavated from his palace to a plain outside the city; he now entrusted the secret of this contrivance to his faithful slaves, and prepared resolutely to meet danger from whatever quarter it might come.

No foresight could have discovered the plot contrived by the Brahmins. Phúr-Zadeh was persuaded to offer a midnight sacrifice at the tomb of his father, in order to avert the calamities which a new series of omens was said to threaten. He went, as he had been directed, alone; while he knelt in prayer the portals of the tomb were opened, and a ghastly skeleton appeared, holding a letter in its bony fingers, which it offered to the terrified king. “Receive the commands of thy father from his appointed messenger,” said a voice of thunder. Phúr-Zadeh took the scroll and fell senseless to the earth.

Early the next morning a council was summoned at the palace, and all the viziers, nobles, and priests, were urgently requested to attend. They came in crowds,

Omad with the rest, anxious to learn the cause of their sovereign's uneasiness. The council met, but it was long before Phúr-Zadeh made his appearance. When he entered, his eyes were red with weeping: he held the letter so wondrously delivered to him open in his hand, and after having taken his seat on the divan, remained for some time absorbed in meditation. At length he handed the letter to Omad, and, in an agitated voice, asked, "Knowest thou the writing?"

So exquisitely had the forgery been executed, that the vizier himself was deceived. "It is," said he, "the hand-writing of my late royal master, your majesty's noble father," and prostrating himself, he raised the paper above his head, to testify his reverence for the memory of his benefactor.

"Read, then, my father's earnest request," sobbed Phúr-Zadeh.

Omad obeyed; and with equal surprise and horror read the following words:—

"Phúr, Monarch of the Indies, Sovereign of the East, Lord of two Oceans, the Glorious Sun of Justice, and Bright Star of Power, to his son Phúr-Zadeh, whose dominions extend from the waters whence the brilliant luminary of day shows the first joyous light of early dawn to the waves that are gilded by his setting rays, health, prosperity, long life, and a fortunate reign.

"Know, my beloved son, that the place which my soul is doomed to inhabit is, to me a perfect solitude and lonely desert. No ghost has any sympathy with me. I wander about, unknowing and unknown. The

length of time that must be spent in this preparatory purification, is a secret known only to the Superior Intelligences, but it will assuredly be protracted by my murmurs, which, however, the feeling of loneliness renders me unable to suppress. It is only when the soul has acquired complete tranquillity that it arrives at the glorious consummation of being absorbed into the essence of the Divinity.\*

“O my son, my dear son, you will hear the voice of your father, and come to his aid.

“O my son, among the viziers there was one whom I always preferred, because the sympathy between our souls was as if we had one heart in common; to him I confided my most secret thoughts, to him I entrusted absolute sway over my dominions. In this gloomy abode of spirits, I have learned that my son treads in his father's steps, and that the minister I loved so fondly continues to be his especial favourite.

“Propitious fate permits Omad to rest from his toils; the gods, most merciful when they appear most harsh, have severed the link that bound him to the world; Radamika and his ancient master equally long for his appearance in these shadowy realms, where his coming will be the signal that their preparatory expiations of the earthly stains that sully the soul are near their end.

“O my son, send down to your father his ancient friend; let him come to relieve my present solitude

\* *Nirwana* or absorption into the essence of Deity, is generally regarded in the East as the state of eternal beatitude.

and hasten my future bliss. I am impatient to behold him; Radamika thirsts for his presence; let him not tarry longer away from us than the last days of this moon."

A dead silence followed the reading of this extraordinary letter. It was broken by Omad, who had rapidly formed his plans; he asked his sovereign by what conveyance the communication had been brought.

Phúr-Zadeh related, with a shudder, the fearful scene at the sepulchre. Murmurs of terror and wonder, some real and some affected, ran through the council, and no persons testified more astonishment than those by whom the plot had been contrived. But even they were astounded by the conduct of Omad; far from shewing any reluctance to meet death, he testified the greatest joy at receiving such an invitation from his beloved master; he even affected to lament the delay that would be occasioned by the necessary preparations for his departure, and took leave of the king, declaring that he would on the instant commence the erection of his funeral pile.

It has been already mentioned that one of the priests was attached to Omad, and had warned him of the machinations of his enemies. There had not been time to give the vizier intimation of this last plot before the meeting of the council; but at the door of the palace Omad met his friend, trembling with impatience and anxiety.

"Welcome,—well met, dear Maitreya," exclaimed Omad to the faithful priest, "thine aid is necessary to



direct the rites of my voluntary sacrifice. Haste with me to mine abode, which soon shall change its master ; instruct me in the prayers meet to offer on the present solemn occasion. My house and all that it contains shall be thy reward."

Maitreya would have expostulated, and perhaps betrayed the imposture, but a sign from Omad imposed silence, and he followed the vizier to his palace, unable to conjecture how such a strange affair would conclude.

Omad soon learned all the particulars of the conspiracy from Maitreya, and the contrivances that had been used by the Brahmins. He informed his wondering friend that he had sure means of escaping the danger and baffling the conspirators ; he only required of the priest to keep his palace closed for six months, and not to enter it himself or permit any one else to do so, until he should be specially summoned by a concerted signal.

A magnificent pile was soon erected outside the walls of the city ; it appeared solid to the eye, but the centre was hollow, and afforded an entrance to the subterraneous passage, which, as it has been already mentioned, Omad had constructed from his palace to the fields beyond the ramparts. Every material that could produce dense smoke and sudden flame was heaped round the sides ; oil and clarified butter were poured upon the pile abundantly, and dry grass was crammed into every interstice.

The conspirators could scarcely credit their complete success ; so far from betraying any suspicion, Omad

complaisantly received their visits of hypocritical condolence, and with duplicity equal to their own, sent them rich presents as parting memorials of his friendship. He requested that Palak should be kept in ignorance of the late events, lest he should interfere to save the life of his preceptor, and he published his will, by which his palace, with all its furniture, was bequeathed to Maitreya.

On the day appointed for Omad's sacrifice, an immense crowd assembled, not only from the capital, but all the neighbouring provinces. Phúr-Zadeh, overwhelmed with sorrow, took his seat on a throne erected in front of the pile ; around him were ranged his courtiers, his nobles, and the chief priests, in their habits of ceremony. Bands of musicians, collected from every quarter, were ranged about the plain, to drown any shrieks that mortal agony might wring from the victim. As far as the eye could reach, a dense mass of human heads might be seen waiting in awe and silence the dreadful event.

Exactly at the hour of noon, Omad, attended only by Maitreya and his two confidential slaves, came forth from a tent, where he had been performing his devotions, clothed in his richest robes ; he prostrated himself before the throne, and demanded from Phúr-Zadeh his last message to his father. The king, unable to speak from emotion, handed him a letter, and Omad, with a steady step and unmoved countenance, ascended the pile. It was fired ; a volume of flame and smoke hid him from the eyes of the spectators !—a deafening

crash of gongs, the bray of a thousand trumpets, and a mingled shout and shriek from the assembled multitude confounded the senses, and Omad descended unnoticed into the cavern. Long before the witnesses of his imaginary funeral returned to the city, Omad, disguised as a mendicant, issued from his palace, passed through the deserted streets, and was far on his road to the distant valley where he had concealed Radamika.

A week had not elapsed, when Palak, crowned with glory, returned from his distant campaign, eager to receive his dearest reward from the welcoming smile of his mistress. He had scarcely entered the city, when the horrid tale of her death and Omad's sacrifice was told him, with all the exaggerations of credulity and superstition. He fell senseless from his steed, and was borne in that state to the palace: it was long before he manifested any signs of life, and when animation was restored, the physicians found that reason had fled. Orders were issued that he should be kept perfectly quiet, and that none but his medical attendants should be permitted to see him. One of Omad's slaves, charged with an important message to the prince, vainly endeavoured to obtain admittance; Phúr-Zadeh was too tenderly attached to his beloved son, to allow the slightest infringement of the precautions deemed necessary for his restoration.

In less than a month the evil administration of Omad's successors had provoked dangerous insurrections throughout the empire. The royal armies, *no longer encouraged by the presence of Palak, and th*

martial odes with which he stimulated their courage before battle, were defeated in every engagement. Phúr-Zadeh wept over his son, and hailed with delight the signs of returning reason, though accompanied by a settled gloom, a melancholy that seemed incurable. The physicians vainly tried to engage him in the war-like dances and sports which had formerly been his delight, and as vainly did they strive to rouse him to martial exertion, by relating the recent disasters and disgraces of his father's arms. At length repeated defeats so alarmed the viziers, that they informed Phúr-Zadeh that there was no hope of safety unless Palak could be persuaded to recite one of his odes to the army.

Phúr-Zadeh visited his son, and urgently supplicated him to appear among the soldiers. The prince assented with a readiness which surprised his attendants ; he ordered his favourite charger to be prepared, that he might inspect and address the army on the following day, in the plains beyond the city. The necessary orders were issued for the review, and Omad's slave resolved to attend, hoping that he might find some opportunity of communicating with the prince ; he procured a fleet courser, determined to make a dash through the ranks of the guards, if every other means should fail.

The army of Phúr-Zadeh was mustered by the generals and formed into squares ; the prince soon appeared in front of the lines, and was received with shouts of joy : *he waved his hand impatiently ; all was hushed*

into silence, while, with a broken voice, Palak began his recitation.

They bid me be merry and join in the dance,  
They bid me have courage, and take up my lance ; —  
How can I be merry ? My bosom is gored :  
How grapple the lance when I'm pierced with a sword ?

They tell me the foemen draw nigh to our camp,  
That they see the bright spears, hear the horses' loud tramp :  
What foe is more cruel than love unappeased ?  
What danger so great as a spirit diseased ?

They talk of my glory :—'tis withered and gone.  
They speak of my battles : — my last fight is done.  
They point to my trophies :— they 're idle and vain.  
They count up all I slew : — would I slept with the slain !

On, onward my courser ! To deserts I'll fly,  
Untrod by a footstep, unseen by an eye,  
With the hot sand beneath, and the bright sky above,  
Alone will I wither, the victim of love.

Scarcely had he concluded, when, dashing the spurs into his courser's side, he fled with headlong speed towards the north. While all stood stupified, Omad's slave dashed forward in pursuit of the prince, and, before the soldiers or spectators had recovered from their astonishment, both were out of sight.

Right onward Palak's gallant steed bore his hapless rider, over bush and brake, rock and moss ; as steadily did Omad's slave continue the wild pursuit, reckless of every peril. The speed of the coursers was well matched, for many a tedious mile and many a weary hour, neither gained advantage over the other ; but, *when* a vertical sun ascended to the zenith, and both

had reached an open arid plain, the horses and their riders began to flag. Palak just then seemed to become aware, for the first time, that he was pursued ; he wheeled round his steed, and exclaimed in a threatening voice, "Back, miscreant, back, I say, as thou valu'st thy life ! venture not to pursue the lion to his lair."

Omad's slave halted and hesitated for a moment. "I bring thee tidings of joy and safety, prince," he exclaimed, and once more urged his horse forward. The words fell without meaning on the ear of Palak ; finding his orders disobeyed, he drew his sword and rushed towards the slave, who, at the sight, half from fatigue and half from terror, fell from his horse. Palak's arm was already raised to give a mortal blow, when the slave held up a bracelet or bangle, which he recognized as the favourite ornament of Radamika.—"Speak, what means this ?" said the prince, now sinking in his turn—"Speak, ere madness drive me again to some deed of desperation."

"Radamika lives," said the slave, "and lives to love thee ; here is the letter of Omad, which I have often risked life to place in thy hands."

The prince grasped the paper, read a few lines, reeled in his saddle, and would have fallen had not the slave hastened to support him. The heat of the sun was now intolerable, and the faithful attendant led the horses to the shelter of a distant grove, exhausting the contents of his water-bottle in efforts to recover the prince from the fainting fit into which he had fallen. They reached the dubious shade of a jungle, and

Palak began slowly to recover. "Where am I?" he exclaimed, "what have I seen? what have I heard?" The slave interfered to check his transports by pointing out the dark forms of two horsemen on the remote verge of the plain which they had quitted.

"If thou hast read aright, prince, thou knowest that life is not life until the danger by which it was threatened is removed. How that is to be done, Omad alone can tell. Let us conceal ourselves in this thicket, and rest with our beasts until night spreads her pall over the earth. Yonder horsemen, if they espy nothing, will be in no hurry to try the strength of their steeds under this burning sky. Come, let us penetrate the jungle; I know a path that will soon lead us to a limpid stream."

The prince assented, and was borne rather than led through the intricacies of the jungle, to a spot where a bubbling fountain gave freshness to a small patch of verdure, and nourishment to a few trees that rose like giants above the tangled brushwood. Palak stretched himself on the grass; he read Omad's letter over and over, until a refreshing calm diffused itself through his soul, and peaceful slumber descended on his eyelids.

It was near midnight when he was awakened by his attendant, and resumed his journey. No accident delayed his course, and he soon embraced those whose supposed death had all but consigned him to an early grave. Omad allowed the lovers to enjoy the bliss of each other's society for several days; but when

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Palak's strength began to return, and the flush of health appeared once more gently to tinge his cheek, he signified that the time for action was near, and that they should prepare to return to the capital.

Maitreya had just returned home from a council of all the nobles and priests, held at a late hour of the night, in consequence of disastrous intelligence received from the army. The southern insurgents had gained a victory, and the royal forces, disheartened by defeat, and stung by the long delay of the arrears of their pay, instead of trying to retrieve their disasters, had mutinied, and were now in full march towards the capital. There was no master-spirit to guide the council; a long debate ended in an adjournment, the usual resource of weakness and indecision. Maitreya, unacquainted with the particulars of Omad's plans, and alarmed by the dangers that threatened his country, was sitting in a state of perplexity, when a servant brought him the signal that his presence was required in Omad's palace. He went unattended, unlocked the portals of the deserted courts, and entered the lonely halls that echoed sadly to his tread. Suddenly a strong hand grasped his arm, and a voice whispered "Come with me." Maitreya was led through many devious windings, until he reached an illuminated chamber, and found himself in the presence of Omad, Palak, and Radamika. Their deliberations lasted a great part of the night, but, unlike those of the royal council, they ended in the adoption of a fixed course of action.

Maitreya informed Omad that the chief Brahmin,



encouraged by the success of his former artifice, designed to bring Phúr-Zadeh a second time to his father's tomb, and present a forged letter commanding him to resign his crown to a member of the priestly caste. It was resolved that this proposal should be encouraged, and that the crafty Brahmin should be urged to put it into execution on the ensuing night.

When the royal council assembled, it was found that the generals and viziers had not been able to form any resolution; the chief Brahmin therefore made his proposal, and it was adopted with the earnestness which men show who know not what to recommend, and are, at the same time, anxious to hide their incapacity.

Employment of any kind is felt to be a blessing in moments of anxiety. Phúr-Zadeh's courtiers and subjects eagerly prepared for the midnight sacrifice at the tomb of Phúr, and, in their anxiety to be minutely correct in every observance, they so closely beset the chief Brahmin, that he was obliged to delegate to Maitreya, the guardianship of the sepulchre, and the care of arranging the ceremonials within the shrine. Ere he could disengage himself from the anxious crowds that sought direction, the hour for the procession had arrived; but, trusting to the contrivances that he had long before arranged, he placed himself confidently at the head of the band of priests, and proceeded to the mausoleum, or rather the temple, erected in honour of the mighty Phúr, over the marble tomb that contained his ashes.

It was near midnight when the procession, faintly illumined by a scanty supply of torches, entered the temple. First came a band of veteran warriors, bearing broken weapons and rifted armour, memorials of the late calamitous defeats ; then followed the Brahmins with the various implements of sacrifice ; next were the viziers and royal councillors, their arms folded, and their eyes fixed on the ground ; last of all, came Phúr-Zehad with his garments rent, his turban unrolled, and ashes strewn on his head. They ranged themselves round the tomb, and, at an appointed signal, commenced the invocation.

## FULL CHORUS.

Shade of glory ! hear us, hear,  
In this hour of woe and fear !

## WARRIORS.

Lo ! before thy tomb we stand,  
A wretched and heart-broken band :  
Reft is India's former might,  
Cloven down in fatal fight.  
Shivered sword and shattered bow  
Check not our triumphant foe ;  
Vainly, vainly do we wield  
Broken spear and riven shield.

## FULL CHORUS.

Shade of glory ! hear us, hear,  
In this hour of woe and fear !

## BRAHMINS.

Dismal portents are on high,  
Lurid meteors in the sky,  
While below, the quivering earth  
Gives to fearful omens birth :  
But, companion of the blessed  
Phúr, by gods a friend confessed,

Thou canst show the lore divine,  
Which may save thy realm and line.

FULL CHORUS.

Shade of glory ! hear us, hear,  
In this hour of woe and fear !

VIZIERS.

Quelling mind and quenching soul,  
Clouds of darkness o'er us roll ;  
Not one ray of wisdom's light  
Bursts upon our mental sight ;  
Reft of sense and reft of power,  
Here before thy shrine we cower ;  
Vain our weakness would we hide,  
Mighty Phúr, our counsels guide.

FULL CHORUS.

Shade of glory ! hear us, hear,  
In this hour of woe and fear !

PHUR-ZADEH.

Father ! father ! ever loved,  
Canst thou see my fate unmoved ?  
Was it not thy stern command  
Crushed thy son, destroyed this land,  
Broke our column,\* rent away  
Omad, Phúr's and India's stay ?  
Ere we sink, to ruin driven,  
Give the counsels he had given.

FULL CHORUS.

Shade of glory ! hear us, hear,  
In this hour of woe and fear.

Ere the last verse was completed, the portals of the tomb burst open, a brilliant pillar of light shot upwards to the roof of the temple, and, to the horror of some and the astonishment of all, revealed the well known forms of Omad and Radamika. The Brahmins,

\* Omad in Persian signifies "a column."

overwhelmed with consternation, dropped the sacred utensils, and their treacherous chief sank to the earth in mortal terror. Wearing the dress in which he had ascended the pile, with the same unmoved aspect and steady step, Omad advanced into the middle of the assembly, and humbly saluting Phúr-Zadeh, presented him a letter in the well-known hand-writing of his father. The king received it; but in the cringing multitude around, he could discover no one that would venture to read the letter. At length Maitreya, who, for reasons that may be conjectured, did not share the confusion of his brethren, offered his services, and in a clear voice read the epistle.

“My son, my dear son, the evils that my imprudent request have brought upon my kingdom and house are known unto me. I have supplicated the gods to redeem my error; they restore Omad to thee, and Radamika to Palak. While the vizier’s wisdom re-establishes prosperity in thy kingdom, Palak, restored to reason by the promise of possessing his beloved, will triumph over all thine enemies. Even now he approaches, conquering and to conquer.”

Shouts in the distance, and a remote clang of arms for a moment interrupted the reader; but the noise was soon hushed and Maitreya continued.

“But, dear son, my solitary state must not return; on the instant that you receive this epistle, send down to me the Brahmins and viziers whose names I enclose; let their blood flow round my sepulchre ere their bodies be consumed on the holy pile.”

The conspirators, conscious that by some mysterious agency they had been caught in their own snares, waited not for the reading of the list, but attempted to fly. They found every avenue blockaded by armed men ; they were seized, bound, and dragged back into the temple, and with them came Palak, restored to health and reason, attended by his favourite warriors, and accompanied by bands of music. A brief whispered consultation took place between Phúr-Zadeh, Palak, and Omad ; it ended by the king's exclaiming, " Let my father's behests be obeyed." At the same time, Palak gave a signal to the musicians to strike up their loudest concert. The cries, remonstrances, and explanations of the traitors were unheard amid the din of gongs and cymbals ; they were beheaded one after another before the sepulchre, and when the last had fallen, the pillar of flame disappeared, and the portals of the tomb closed.

We need not add that the remainder of Phúr-Zadeh's reign, guided by the counsels of Omad, was peaceful and prosperous ; that the sceptre subsequently descended to his son, who had long before been the happy husband of the vizier's daughter, that their posterity for many generations possessed the empire of Northern India, and that it is still a proverbial expression in the East, — " May your union be as happy as that of Falak and Radamika!"

## THE BROKEN CHAIN.

### PART FIRST.

#### I.

It is most sad to see—to know  
This world so full of war and woe,  
E'er since our parents' failing duty,  
Bequeathed the curse to all below,  
And left the burning breach of beauty.  
Where the flower hath fairest hue,  
Where the breeze hath balmiest breath,  
Where the dawn hath softest dew,  
Where the heaven hath deepest blue,  
There is death.  
Where the gentle streams of thinking,  
Through our hearts that flow so free,  
Have the deepest, softest sinking  
And the fullest melody;  
Where the crown of hope is nearest,  
Where the voice of joy is clearest,  
Where the heart of youth is lightest,  
Where the light of love is brightest,  
There is death.

## II.

It is the hour when day's delight  
Fadeth in the dewy sorrow  
Of the star-inwoven night ;  
And the red lips of the west  
Are in smiles of lightning drest,  
Speaking of a lovely morrow :  
But there's an eye in which, from far,  
The chill beams of the evening star  
Do softly move and mildly quiver ;  
Which, ere the purple mountains meet  
The light of morning's misty feet,  
Will be dark — and dark for ever.

## III.

It was within a convent old,  
Through her lips the low breath sighing,  
Which the quick pains did enfold  
With a paleness calm, but cold,  
Lay a lovely lady dying.  
As meteors from the sunless north  
Through long low clouds illumine the air,  
So brightly shone her features forth  
Amidst her darkly tangled hair ;  
And, like a spirit, still and slow,  
A light beneath that raven veil  
Moved — where the blood forgot to glow,  
As moonbeams shine on midnight snow,  
So dim — so sad — so pale :

And, ever as the death came nearer,  
That melancholy light waxed clearer ;  
It rose, it shone, it never dwindled,  
As if in death it could not die ;  
The air was filled with it, and kindled  
As souls are by sweet agony.  
Where once the life was rich and red,  
The burning lip was dull and dead,  
As crimson cloud-streaks melt away  
Before a ghastly darkened day.  
Faint and low the pulses faded,  
One by one, from brow and limb ;  
There she lay—her dark eyes shaded  
By her fingers dim :  
And through their paly brightness burning  
With a wild inconstant motion,  
As reflected stars of morning  
Through the crystal foam of ocean.  
There she lay—like something holy,  
Moveless—voiceless, breathing slowly,  
Passing —withering—fainting—failing,  
Lulled, and lost, and unbewailing.

## IV.


The Abbess knelt beside, to bless  
Her parting hour with tenderness,  
And watched the light of life depart,  
With tearful eye and weary heart ;




And, ever and anon, would dip  
Her finger in the hallowed water,  
And lay it on her parching lip,  
Or cross her death damped brow ;  
And softly whisper—Peace—my daughter,  
For thou shalt slumber softly now.  
And upward held, with pointing finger,  
The cross before her darkening eye ;  
Its glance was changing, nor did linger  
Upon the ebony and ivory ;  
Her lips moved feebly, and the air  
Between them whispered—not with prayer !  
Oh ! who shall know what wild and deep  
Imaginations rouse from sleep,  
Within that heart, whose quick decay  
So soon shall sweep them all away.  
Oh ! who shall know what things they be  
That tongue would tell—that glance doth see ;  
Which rouse the voice, the vision fill,  
Ere eye be dark, and tongue be still.

## v.

It is most fearful when the light  
Of thoughts, all beautiful and bright,  
That through the heart's illumination  
Darts burning beams and fiery flashes,  
Fades into weak wan animation,  
And darkens into dust and ashes ;  
And hopes, that to the heart have been  
As to the forest is its green,



(Or as the gentle passing by  
Of its spirits' azure wings  
Is to the broad, wind-wearied sky) ;  
Do pale themselves like fainting things,  
And wither, one by one, away,  
Leaving a ghastly silence where  
Their voice was wont to move and play  
Amidst the fibres of our feeling,  
Like the low and unseen stealing,  
Of the soft and sultry air ;  
That, with its fingers weak, unweaves  
The dark and intertangled hair  
Of many moving forest leaves ;  
And, though their life be lost, do float  
Around us still, yet far remote,  
And come at the same call, arranged  
By the same thoughts ; but oh, how changed !  
Alas ! dead hopes are fearful things  
To dwell around us, for their eyes  
Pierce through our souls like adder stings ;  
Vampyre-like, their troops arise,  
Each in his own death entranced,  
Frozen and corpse-countenanced ;  
Filling memory's maddened eye  
With a shadowed mockery,  
And a wan and fevered vision  
Of her loved and lost Elysian ;  
Until we hail, and love, and bless  
The last strange joy, where joy hath fled,  
The last one hope, where hope is dead,



The finger of forgetfulness ;  
Which, dark as night, and dull as lead,  
Comes across the spirit, passing  
Like a coldness through night-air,  
With its withering wings effacing  
Thoughts that lived or lingered there ;  
Light, and life, and joy, and pain,  
Till the frozen heart rejoices,  
As the echoes of lost voices  
Die, and do not rise again ;  
And shadowy memories wake no more  
Along the heart's deserted shore ;  
But fall and faint away, and sicken  
Like a nation fever-stricken,  
And see not, from the bosom reft  
The desolation they have left.

## VI.

Yet, though that trance be still and deep,  
It will be broken, ere its sleep  
Be dark and unawaked — for ever ;  
And from the soul quick thoughts will leap  
Forth like a sad sweet-singing river,  
Whose gentle waves flow softly o'er  
That broken heart—that desert shore :  
The lamp of life leaps up, before  
Its light be lost, to live no more ;  
Ere yet its shell of clay be shattered,  
And all the beams it once could pour  
In dust of death be darkly scattered.

## VII.

Alas ! the stander-by might tell  
That lady's racking thoughts too well ;  
The work within he might descry,  
By trembling brow, and troubled eye,  
That as the lightning, fiery fierce,  
Strikes chasms along the keen ice-plain ;  
The barbed and burning memories pierce  
Her dark and dying brain.  
And many mingled visions swim  
Within the convent chamber dim ;  
The sad twilight, whose lingering lines  
Fall faintly through the forest pines,  
And with their dusky radiance lume,  
That lowly bed and lonely room,  
Are filled, before her earnest gaze,  
With dazzling dreams of by-gone days.  
They come—they come—a countless host,  
Forms long unseen, and looks long lost,  
And voices loved—not *well* forgot,  
Awake, and seem, with accents dim,  
Along the convent air to float ;  
That innocent air, that knoweth not  
A sound, except the vesper hymn.

## VIII.

'Tis past—that rush of hurried thought —  
The light within her deep, dark eye  
Was quenched by a wan tear, mistily,  
Which trembled, though it lightened not,

As the cold peace, which all may share,  
Soothed the last sorrow life could bear.  
What grief was that — the broken heart  
Loved to the last, and would not part ?  
What grief was that, whose calmness cold  
By death alone could be consoled ?  
As the soft hand of coming rest  
Bowed her fair head upon her breast,  
As the last pulse decayed, to keep  
Her heart from heaving in its sleep,  
The silence of her voice was broken,  
As by a gasp of mental pain :  
“ May the faith thou hast forgotten,  
Bind thee with its broken chain.”  
The Abbess raised her, but in vain ;  
For, as the last faint word was spoken,  
The silver cord was burst in twain,  
The golden bowl was broken.

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## PART SECOND.

## 1.

THE bell from Saint Cecilia's shrine  
Had tolled the evening hour of prayer ;  
With tremulation far and fine,  
It waked the purple air :  
The peasant heard its distant beat,  
And crossed his brow with reverence meet :

The maiden heard it sinking sweet  
Within her jasmine bower,  
And treading down, with silver feet,  
Each pale and passioned flower :  
The weary pilgrim, lowly lying  
By Saint Cecilia's fountain grey,  
Smiled to hear that curfew dying  
Down the darkening day ;  
And where the white waves move and glisten  
Along the river's reedy shore,  
The lonely boatman stood to listen,  
Leaning on his lazy oar.


## 11.

On Saint Cecilia's vocal spire  
The sun had cast his latest fire,  
And flecked the west with many a fold  
Of purple clouds o'er bars of gold.  
That vocal spire is all alone,  
Albeit its many-winding tone  
Floats waste away — oh ! far away,  
Where bowers are bright and fields are gay ;  
That vocal spire is all alone,  
Amidst a secret wilderness,  
With deep free forest overgrown,  
And purple mountains, which the kiss  
Of pale-lipped clouds doth fill with love  
Of the bright heaven that burns above.

The woods around are wild and wide,  
And interwove with breezy motion ;  
Their bend before the tempest tide  
Is like the surge of shoreless ocean ;  
Their summer voice is like the tread  
Of trooping steeds to battle bred ;  
Their autumn voice is like the cry  
Of a nation clothed with misery ;  
And the stillness of the winter's wood,  
Is as the hush of a multitude.

## III.

The banks beneath are flecked with light  
All through the clear and crystal night :  
For as the blue heaven, rolling on,  
Doth lift the stars up one by one ;  
Each, like a bright eye through its gates  
Of silken lashes dark and long,  
With lustre fills, and penetrates  
Those branches close and strong ;  
And nets of tangled radiance weaves  
Between the many twinkling leaves,  
And through each small and verdant chasm,  
Lets fall a flake of fire,  
'Till every leaf with voiceful spasm,  
Wakes like a golden lyre.  
Swift, though still, the fiery thrill  
Creeps along from spray to spray,  
Light and music mingled, fill



dry pulse of passioned breath ;  
rich, o'er the incense-sickened death  
the faint flowers, that live by day,  
stands like a soul above the clay,  
whose beauty hath not passed away.

## IV.


ark ! hark, along the twisted roof  
bough and leafage, tempest-proof,  
ere whispers, hushed and hollow,  
the beating of a horse's hoof,  
high low faint echoes follow,  
down the deeply swarded floor  
a forest aisle, the muffled tread,  
singing where the leaves are dead,  
increases more and more ;  
and lo ! between the leaves and light,  
in the avenue's narrow span,  
there moves a blackness, shaped like  
the shadow of a man.  
rarer now, where through the maze  
save close the horizontal rays ;  
moves,—a solitary knight,  
borne with undulation light  
as the windless walk of ocean,  
in a black steed's Arabian grace,  
mighty of mien, and proud of pace,  
it modulate of motion.  
er breast and limb, from head to heel,  
all flexile folds of sable steel :



Little the lightning of war could avail,  
If it glanced on the strength of the folded mail.  
The beaver bars his vizage mask,  
By outward bearings unrevealed :  
He bears no crest upon his casque,  
No symbol on his shield.  
Slowly, and with slackened rein,  
Either in sorrow, or in pain,  
Through the forest he paces on,  
As our life does in a desolate dream,  
When the heart and the limbs are as heavy as stone,  
And the remembered tone and moony gleam  
Of hushed voices, and dead eyes,  
Draw us on the dim path of shadowy destinies.

## v.

The vesper chime hath ceased to beat,  
And the hill echoes to repeat  
The trembling of the argent bell.  
What second sounding—dead and deep,  
And cold of cadence, stirs the sleep  
Of twilight with its sullen swell ?  
The knight drew bridle, as he heard  
Its voice creep through his beaver barred,  
Just where a cross of marble stood,  
Grey in the shadow of the wood.  
Whose youngest coppice, twined and torn,  
Concealed its access worship-worn :



might be chance — it might be art,  
: opportune, or unconfessed,  
it from this cross there did depart  
pathway to the west ;  
y which a narrow glance was given,  
o the high hills and highest heaven,  
o the blue river's bended line,  
and Saint Cecilia's lonely shrine.

## VI.

blue, and baseless, and beautiful,  
did the boundless mountains bear  
their folded shadows into the golden air.  
The comfortlessness of their chasms was full  
of orient cloud, and undulating mist,  
which, where their silver cataracts hissed,  
livered with panting colour. Far above  
lightning pulse of soundless fire did move,  
the blue heaven itself, and, snake-like, slid  
round peak, and precipice, and pyramid ;  
white lines of light along their crags alit,  
and the cold lips of their chasms were wreathed with it,  
until they smiled with passionate fire ; the sky  
hung over them with answering ecstasy :  
through its pale veins of cloud, like blushing blood,  
from south to north the swift pulsation glowed  
with infinite emotion ; but it ceased  
in the far chambers of the dewy west.

There the weak day stood withering, like a spirit  
Which, in its dim departure, turns to bless  
Their sorrow whom it leaveth, to inherit  
Their lonely lot of night and nothingness.  
Keen in its edge, against the farthest light,  
The cold, calm earth its black horizon lifted,  
Though a faint vapour, which the winds had sifted  
Like thin sea-sand, in undulations white  
And multitudinous, veiled the lower stars.  
And over this, there hung successive bars  
Of crimson mist, which had no visible ending  
But in the eastern gloom ; voiceless and still,  
Illimitable in their arched extending,  
They kept their dwelling place in heaven ; the chill  
Of the passing night-wind stirred them not ; the  
    ascending  
Of the keen summer moon was marked by them  
Into successive steps ; the plenitude  
Of pensive light was kindled and subdued  
Alternate, as her crescent keel did stem  
Those waves of currentless cloud : the diadem  
Of her companion planet near her, shed  
Keen quenchless splendour down the drowsy air ;  
Glowed as she glowed, and followed where she led,  
High up the hill of the night heaven, where  
Thin threads of darkness, braided like black hair,  
Were in long trembling tresses interwoven.  
The soft blue eyes of the superior deep  
Looked through them, with the glance of those who  
    cannot weep  
For sorrow. Here and there the veil was cloven,

---

By crossing of faint winds, whose wings did keep  
Such cadence as the breath of dreamless sleep  
Among the stars, and soothed with strange delight.  
The vain vacuity of the Infinite.

## VII.

Stiff as stone, and still as death,  
Stood the Knight like one amazed,  
And dropped his rein, and held his breath,  
So anxiously he gazed.  
Oh ! well might such a scene and sun  
Surprise the sudden sight,  
And yet his mien was more of one  
In dread than in delight.  
His glance was not on heaven or hill,  
On cloud or lightning, swift or still,  
On azure earth or orient air ;  
But long his fixed look did lie,  
On one bright line of western sky, —  
What saw he there ?

## VIII.

On the brow of a lordly line  
Of chasm-divided crag, there stood  
The walls of Saint Cecilia's shrine.  
Above the undulating wood  
Broad basalt bulwarks, stern and stiff,  
Ribbed, like black bones, the grisly cliff.  
On the torn summit stretched away  
*The convent walls, tall, old, and grey ;*

So strong their ancient size did seem,  
So stern their mountain seat,  
Well might the passing pilgrim deem  
Such desperate dwelling-place more meet  
For soldier true, or baron bold,  
For army's guard or bandit's hold,  
Than for the rest, deep, calm, and cold,  
Of those whose tale of troublous life is told.

## IX.

The topmost tower rose narrow and tall,  
O'er the broad mass of crag and wall ;  
Against the streak of western light  
It raised its solitary height.  
Just above, nor far aloof  
From the cross upon its roof,  
Sat a silver star.  
The low clouds drifting fast and far,  
Gave, by their own mocking loss,  
Motion to the star and cross.  
Even the black tower was stirred below  
To join the dim, mysterious march,  
The march so strangely slow.  
Near its top, an opening arch  
Let through a passage of pale sky  
Enclosed with stern captivity ;  
And in its hollow height there hung,  
From a black bar, a brazen bell :  
Its hugeness was traced clear and well  
The slanting rays among.

Ever and anon it swung  
Half way round its whirling wheel;  
Back again, with rocking reel,  
Lazily its length was flung,  
Till brazen lip and beating tongue  
Met once, with unrepeatd peal,  
Then paused ; — until the winds could feel  
The weight of the wide sound, that clung  
To their inmost spirit, like the appeal  
Of startling memories, strangely strung,  
That point to pain, and yet conceal.  
Again with single sway it rung,  
And the black tower beneath could feel  
The undulating tremor steal  
Through its old stones, with long shiver.  
The wild woods felt it creep and quiver  
Through their thick leaves and hushed air,  
As fear creeps through a murderer's hair.  
And the grey reeds beside the river,  
In the moonlight meek and mild,  
Moved like spears when war is wild.

## X.

And still the knight like statue stood,  
In the arched opening of the wood.  
Slowly still the brazen bell  
Marked its modulated knell;  
Heavily, heavily, one by one,  
The dull strokes gave their thunder tone.  
So long the pause between was led,  
*Ere one rose the last was dead —*

Dead and lost by hollow and hill.  
Again, again, it gathered still.  
Ye who hear, peasant or peer,  
By all you hope and all you fear,  
Lowly now be heart and knee,  
Meekly be your orison said  
For the body in its agony,  
And the spirit in its dread.

## XI.

Reverent as a cowed monk,  
The knight before the cross had sunk ;  
Just as he bowed his helmless head,  
Twice the bell struck faint and dead,  
And ceased. Hill, valley, and winding shore  
The rising roll received no more.  
His lips were weak, his words were low,  
A paleness came across his brow ;  
He started to his feet, in fear  
Of something that he seemed to hear.  
Was it the west wind that did feign  
Articulation strange and vain ?  
Vainly with thine ear thou warrest :  
Lo ! it comes, it comes again !  
Through the dimly woven forest  
Comes the cry of one in pain —  
“ May the Faith thou hast forgotten  
Bind thee with its broken chain.”

J. R.

*Christ Church, Oxford.*

## THE SONG OF THE BESIEGED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PROVOST OF BRUGES."

Drink ! drink !

WHY should you pause ? It is all that remains to us—  
Food there is none for your hollow-cheeked crew ;  
But the bottle the blood of his body yet drains to us—  
Drains to the last, like a comrade true.

Drink ! drink !

There's a virtue in wine that can mock at despairing ;  
A valour that laughs at the threat of the foe ;  
Lean famine grows merry, despondency daring—  
To the brim — to the brim let the wine cup flow !

Drink ! drink !

Our powder is gone—every grain is expended  
But that hoarded charge of the mine at our feet ;  
There, when the old walls can no more be defended,  
A spark to the train, and our glory's complete !

Drink ! drink !

Hark to the foe — how their cannon is roaring,  
While our silent guns send no shot in return :  
Their shouts mingle loud with the balls they are  
pouring ;  
But woe to the victors ! their widows shall mourn.



Drink ! drink !

They count us their spoil—they make ready the torture ;

Fools ! where are the eyes its infliction shall see ?

Ha ! ha ! we will take a more easy departure,

And die as we lived—the unconquered, the free !

Drink ! drink !

That dull, heavy sound—'twas the battered wall  
crashing ;

The breach will be stormed—they are nearing it now ;

I see the bright steel through the darkness come  
flashing,—

The hour is accomplished—remember your vow !

Down ! down !

Dash down the goblet !—'Tis broken in shivers !

An emblem and type of the fast-coming end,

When the victim and tyrant, deceived and deceivers,

In one common ruin shall shatter and blend.

Now ! now !

Hand join in hand, let your pulses be steady —

They enter ! they mount to their funeral pyre !

Let none be shut out ! Brothers ! friends ! are you ready ?

One moment—hark ! silence !—the signal !—now—

FIRE !



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**P**



## . THE CO-HEIRESSES.

BY AGNES STRICKLAND.

It was neither a time for marrying nor giving in marriage, when the nuptial vows were exchanged between the gallant cavalier, Colonel Montfort, and Lady Alice Seagrave, one of the beautiful co-heiresses of a wealthy nobleman, who had contrived to steer his course through the contending storms of that momentous period so cautiously, as to avoid committing himself irrevocably, either with the king or the parliament. The bridal of his eldest daughter was not sanctioned by the consent of Lord Seagrave, though solemnized within his own chapel; it was a secret and a stolen match, contracted unknown to him, with no other witnesses than the younger sister of the pale and trembling Alice, and the old porter of the castle, Peter Lockwood, the foster-father of both the young ladies, and who, on this occasion, took upon himself the paternal office of giving away the noble bride.

Lord Seagrave would sooner have beheld that fair form, shrouded, confined, and laid low in the dust and

darkness of the grave, than seen her finger encircled by the bridal ring which united her fates with those of the high-minded but impoverished partizan of his captive sovereign. Lady Seagrave, the step-mother of his daughters, had persuaded him that her favourite nephew, Sir James Balders, would be the most eligible husband he could select for Lady Alice. Sir James Balders had evinced to the full, as much world-craft as himself in the great struggle between the parliament and the crown ; nay, even more, for he enjoyed some credit with the former, in consequence of having taken the covenant, just at the critical moment when success began to denote which was the better cause to those who had not previously made up their minds on that point.

His estates were contiguous to those of Lord Seagrave, and the alliance appeared very desirable to all parties but Lady Alice and her sister. There was also another dissentient in the family, whose opposition was perhaps the most important of all. This was Father Benedict, the household priest at Beechmont House ; for Lord Seagrave and his daughters were members of the olden faith. Sir James Balders was a sort of lukewarm puritan, and Father Benedict strenuously advocated the cause of the catholic Colonel Montfort to Lady Alice, who was only too willing to believe that, for once, religion was on the side of love. Their correspondence, their meetings, were all arranged, as it were, under the mystic shadow of the cross, and when the trying day drew near that the valiant Colonel Mont-

fort was ordered by his commander, Lord Coring, on a service of peculiar peril, connected with the defence of Colchester, Father Benedict was the first to back his suit to Lady Alice for a private union.

It was in the cold grey dawn of a showery April morning, when the said Father Benedict forsook his pillow without a summons, and donned his hymeneal stole with the comfortable reflection that he was about to perform a good and acceptable service to holy mother church, by uniting the elder co-heiress of the lands and honours of Seagrave, to a member of the true faith.

Precisely at the same instant as the chapel clock told the third hour of morning, the portals of Beechmont Hall were cautiously unfolded by Peter Lockwood the porter, to admit the muffled form of the cavalier bridegroom, who had exchanged velvet hat and drooping plumes, for the plain steel cap usually worn by the Round-head troopers, and shrouded his stately form in a frieze cloak to escape observation. At the same moment the timid yet venturesome bride and her sister bride-maid, simply attired in their muslin wrapping-dresses, without jewels, flowers, or any other nuptial adornments, glided with noiseless steps from their separate chambers, and, exchanging a silent embrace as they met in the corridor, hurried into the chapel together by one door, as the officiating priest with his breviary in his hand, and the spurred and booted colonel, followed by Peter Lockwood, entered by that opposite. No greeting beyond that of an ex-



pressive pressure of hands took place between any of the parties. The tapers were dimly burning at the altar in the misty morning light. The priest commenced the service of matrimony in a low, cautious voice, scarcely above the compass of a whisper. The responses of the bridegroom and bride were pronounced in the same key, so as to be inaudible ten paces from the spot where they stood; and if any stranger had witnessed the scene from the entrance of the chapel, it would have had the appearance rather of a visionary *tableau* conjured up by fancy's magic, than of one of the agitating acts of the eventful drama of real life. One short hour after the nuptial benediction had been given, and the priest with the humble assistant in that mysterious bridal had withdrawn, the bridegroom had exchanged an impassioned adieu with his weeping bride, and departed, leaving her and her sister alone in the chapel, among the silent memorials of their ancient line.

"I have done nought to disgrace these," said Lady Alice, pointing to the sculptured effigies of crusaders, barons, and grand justiciaries of England, whose names were proudly emblazoned, not on monumental marbles alone, but in the historic records of their country. "I have exchanged the name of Seagrave for one not less illustrious; and if the gifts of fortune have been sparingly accorded to my husband, he is too richly endowed with high and glorious qualities to require them."

"Ah, Alice! how often have I said with reference to

rank as well as fortune, that Nature's wealth and Nature's nobility, claimed the pre-eminence over all other distinctions," observed Lady Eleanor.

"True, my sweet sister, but—"

"Ah! I knew what you would say, for you have said it once before, Alice; repeating, though in softer words, the stern sentence of my father, that a plebeian was no mate for Lady Eleanor Seagrave."

"I did not apply a term so offensive to him, did I Eleanor?"

"No, but you meant it, when you said, Richard Arncliffe surely has not presumed to raise his thoughts to a Seagrave! And what were then your ideas?"

"Nay, dearest Eleanor, I—"

"Say no more, Alice, for it is evident you considered adventitious circumstances alone, remembering the humble birth of the companion of our childhood, and forgetting all those high and heroic qualities, those virtues and talents which were early appreciated by me, and which have been since so fully acknowledged by his country."

"But he has gained distinction in a bad cause, my Eleanor."

"Ay, as we have been taught to call it."

"A good man and a high-born gentleman would not have sided with traitors, with fanatics, and hypocrites," said Lady Alice.

"I have told him so myself, unhappily," said Lady Eleanor, sighing: "and like a blind idiot, have sacri-

ficed happiness to party feeling. His high spirit could not brook injurious taunts from any one, but least of all from me."

"You have then parted in wrath?"

"Yes, never to meet again. These were his last words. 'The scorn of your proud kindred, Lady Eleanor, I could have borne, as I have borne it, for your sake, but your own I cannot, will not endure. Forget, I pray you, that one so much beneath you as Richard Arncliffe ever dared to think it possible that you could love him for himself. Ay, cease to remember his existence, unless the hour should come when you may require the services of one true friend.'"

"Nay, then he loves you still?"

"Yes, in that soreness and bitterness of spirit which will make the once dear name of Eleanor Seagrave a knell to his ear, and her remembrance as a two-edged sword to his heart," said Eleanor sighing.

"Better to be present to the mind of the beloved on any terms, than to become an object of indifference," rejoined Lady Alice, as they left the chapel.

The scene that had there been transacted was not suspected by any individual in Beechmont House, save those already in the secret; and the wedded co-heiress of Seagrave continued to move in the domestic circle, and to pursue her maiden occupations as before; but there was a reflective and pensive abstraction in her manner, that betrayed that her thoughts were little interested in her employments. The pattern lingered on

the embroidery frame. Her eye was unconscious of the contents of the page on which it rested, when, to escape the task of mingling in general conversation, she took up some favourite volume and pretended to bury herself in its contents; and if she tuned her lute, it was only to give utterance to the feelings of her heart, by singing ditties of the gallant and devoted cavaliers whose cause was becoming every day more perilous; while the *Mercuries* and *Diurnals*, as the newspapers of those days were called, were watched for and devoured by her with the most eager interest, in the hope of gaining, through the medium of their columns, intelligence of her absent husband. Every day she rose from the perusal of these journals of the rival parties whose strife troubled England, with a pale cheek and apprehensive heart. She knew that Montfort was shut up in Colchester with the last remnants of the adherents of the royal cause, by the victorious army of Lord Fairfax, and the accounts of the straitness of the siege and the sufferings of the besieged, from the scarcity of provisions, and their frequent losses of gallant and enterprising officers in the desperate sallies which they were constantly making upon the beleaguers, were such as to fill her with the most acute apprehensions.

With scarcely less intensity of interest were the same papers scanned by Lady Eleanor; but the feelings which attended their perusal were certainly of a very different tone from those of Lady Alice; for every column of the parliamentary Journals set forth the

achievements, or bore testimony to the talents and popularity of him who engrossed so considerable a portion of her thoughts.

"How strange!" observed Lord Seagrave one day, as he tossed the "*Perfect Diurnal*" from his hand with an ejaculation of contempt; "how passing strange it is, that the Round-heads should keep up such an eternal pother about our old apothecary's son, Dick Arncliffe."

"Are not the destinies of England chiefly ruled by the son of a brewer?" rejoined Lady Eleanor,— "a more ignoble calling I ween, than the learned art of pharmacy."

"Humph," retorted Lord Seagrave, "there be small grounds for dispute, I trow, between the claims of the quart-pot and the gallipot for precedency. All I can say, is, that I should be sorry to see my family bearings quartered with the cognizance of either."

"There is little chance now, I fear, of any of the leading members of the new government forming an alliance with families suspected of attachment to the old order of things," said Lady Eleanor.

"So much the better," rejoined Lord Seagrave: "I neither desire to connect myself with ruined spend-thrifts nor upstart traitors. It was a bad day for men who had anything to lose, when the ill omened names of Cavaliers and Round-heads were first heard in England. I protested from the beginning that I would have nought to do with either. Tell me of men like my future son-in-law, Sir James Balders."

"A stagnant pool in the midst of a vortex of contending waves ; a dish of skimmed milk that nothing can agitate but its own acerbity !" retorted Lady Eleanor.

"My good father, he will never be son-in-law of yours, unless Lady Seagrave present you with a younger daughter for his bride. Alice and I have both forsworn him."

"How dare you talk of such rebellings, my lady Prate-apace ! I tell you Sir James Balders shall be the husband of one of you ; I care not which."

"Neither doth he, as we are co-heiresses," said Lady Alice ; "but I would rather be wedded to my shroud than to a husband of his fashion."

"Your reasons, Madam ?"

"They are so numerous that I will only name one. He is a puritan."

"So much the better, according to the present state of things in England, and he hath promised that you shall have perfect liberty of conscience."

"Indeed ! and will you confirm his liberal guarantee, on that most important point ?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Then, my dear lord and father, I am released from all matrimonial engagements with Sir James Balders, for my conscience will never permit me to contract the deadly sin of marrying a heretic, and a man whom I detest," said Lady Alice.

"Then Eleanor must."

"Nay, I have the same objections as my sister."

"At any rate, you cannot twist your own perversity

into a case of conscience," said Lord Seagrave, "since you have once expressed your willingness to wed a heretic."

"Ay, one of my own choosing, my Lord, which makes all the difference in the world," said Lady Eleanor; "but as that will never be now, I pray you to allow me to enjoy my maiden liberty in quietness, my Lord."

"You shall do no such thing. I am determined to choose mine own successors, by wedding my co-heiresses after mine own pleasure, or I shall have two preaching sons-in-law forced upon me by the parliament forsooth!"

"It will require more power than the parliament possesses, to compel me to wed contrary to my own good liking," said Lady Eleanor.

"Or me either," rejoined Lady Alice; "therefore, good father, let us be at peace."

"I will not allow either of you to know what peace is, till I see one or other the wife of Sir James Balders," rejoined Lord Seagrave.

Three short weeks after this declaration, the co-heiresses of Seagrave, by the unexpected death of their father, became the arbitresses of their own destiny, being of full age to enter into possession of the extensive patrimony which had devolved upon them as the sole representatives of their ancient line.

But on the same evening that witnessed the obsequies of the last Lord Seagrave, the alarming rumour of the fall of Colchester, and the sanguinary execution of two

of the brave defenders of that last strong hold of loyalty, Sir George Lisle, and Sir Charles Lucas, was brought to Beechmont Hall by some of the attendants on Lord Seagrave's funeral. Scarcely, indeed, had the grave closed over his remains, ere this agitating communication was whispered to the pale weeping Alice, whose natural grief for the death of her father, had been in no slight degree aggravated, by the reflection of the undutiful step she had taken in contracting a marriage unknown to him, and certainly in opposition to his wishes. The sudden nature of Lord Seagrave's death in consequence of a fall from his horse, had prevented her from confessing her fault and suing for his pardon; and while she stood beside his grave with the feelings of a self-condemned culprit, the tidings which the sympathizing porter had lingered beyond the rest of the mourners to communicate, fell on her trembling ear like the knell of her beloved husband; for Colonel Montfort was scarcely less distinguished for his zeal and active services in the royal cause, than the victims who had been immolated by the vindictive Round-heads.

The chapel with its sable hangings, which had so recently been the scene of her stolen nuptials, swam before her sight; she caught at one of the pillars for support, and, but for the prompt assistance of her sister, would have fallen on the marble pavement.

"Be of more courage, Alice, dearest," said Lady Eleanor. "We know not yet that Colchester has really fallen."



"Ill news is always true," sobbed Lady Alice, "and my husband, my dear, dear husband, is perhaps at this moment a mangled disfigured corpse, murdered by the merciless traitors, who have slain so many noble gentlemen in cold blood."

"Hush, my sweet sister, you may be, and are I trust distressing yourself needlessly," interposed Lady Eleanor. "Colchester is not so far distant, but we may in the course of a few hours ascertain all particulars connected with Colonel Montfort."

"Nay, I will ride thither myself," cried Lady Alice, starting to her feet. "I am my own mistress now, and where my husband is, there will I be also. His prison shall be my palace, and if they kill him they shall kill me also, and we will be buried in the same grave."

"No, Alice, no, you must not think of such rash things," cried Lady Eleanor, detaining her sister with gentle violence! "No, no, my lady!" said Peter, "Colchester is not a place for gentle ladies the first night of its fall, neither must it be said that my Lord's own daughter rode forth like a leaguering lass on the night of his burial to seek her lover."

"My husband, mine own wedded husband!" shrieked Lady Alice, wringing her hands and struggling with her sister.

"Alice, you must not, shall not go," cried Lady Eleanor; "only be patient for this one night, and we will send Peter to enquire the truth of these fearful

tidings, and how it fares with Montfort; and then, if need be, we will go together."

"Be it so then," said Lady Alice, "but in the mean time, how long will it take some swift messenger to ride post-haste to Colchester, to inquire of my husband's state?"

"My son James hath already ridden off for that purpose, Lady Alice," said the porter, "and I trust that with God's blessing, we may look for his return in about six hours' time. Father Benedict hath also started for Colchester, to make espials into the state of things there; and likewise Sir James Balders, as I heard, called lustily to horse, as soon as he had led my Lady Seagrave from the chapel, and I suppose his purpose was to pay his compliments to General Fairfax and the other Round-head traitors on their signal triumph."

"The time-serving poltroon!" cried Lady Alice. "Ay, now may we be sure that Colchester hath indeed fallen, and the cause of loyalty is for ever crushed: but Eleanor, sweet sister, doth not his presence at Colchester augur the worst for me?"

"Fear not, my Lady Alice; for let the worst come to the worst, I do suppose one word from my Lady Eleanor will set all right;—that is, if she be not too proud to sue to master Richard Arncliff," observed old Peter.

"Eleanor, dear Eleanor!" cried Lady Alice, grasping her sister's arm beseechingly.

Lady Eleanor turned away. "Alice, it is impossible."

"Nay, I will go to him myself then," said Lady Alice.

"You, Alice?"

"Yes, I:—do'st think that a punctilio is to prevent me from making an effort to preserve my husband from the same fate which has robbed the world of Lisle and Lucas?"

"Remember, my Lady, you have promised to abide patiently till morning, or till the return of the messengers that have been despatched to Colchester," said Peter.

"Then I will keep my anxious vigil here," cried Lady Alice, seating herself at the foot of one of those stately canopied tombs, whose mystic ornaments and sculptured effigies had escaped the desecration of William Dowsing and his brother parliamentary commissioners, in their recent destructive visits to the churches and chapels in Suffolk.

Sadly and slowly, that long cheerless night wore away; and just as the early beams of a glorious sunrise stole through the lofty stained windows of the chapel, and lighted up the richly fretted screen and altar, a step that seemed, by its hasty tread, to announce tidings of moment, was heard in the corridor without. It was the porter's son, James Lockwood, who entered with pale and haggard looks.

"What news?" demanded Lady Eleanor. James turned a piteous glance upon Lady Alice, who, unable to articulate the anxious sentence that trembled on her tongue, sat with wan cheeks and expanded eyes, gazing in a speechless agony of inquiry on the messenger.

"Sad news, my Lady, sad news for us all : Colchester hath fallen, and butcher work hath followed."

"My husband ! my husband !" gasped Lady Alice.

"How fares it with Colonel Montfort, James ?" asked Lady Eleanor.

"It was scarcely possible for me to hear any thing like certainty, my Lady, but—"

"Speak out, we would hear the truth."

"I was told, dear ladies, that he was tried by a military commission, and—and—"

"He is under sentence of death."

"Dear ladies, you know how these trials end."

"Ay, with the death-volley from a file of murderous troopers," said Lady Alice, in a voice hoarse with suppressed feeling ; "I said it would be so."

"I heard that twelve at noon this day was the appointed time for the execution of the brave colonel," whispered James Lockwood to Lady Eleanor.

"Order four of the swiftest horses to the post-coach," said Lady Eleanor ; "I will ride a race against time for his life."

As James Lockwood left the chapel to perform her bidding, a belted horseman in Sir James Balders' livery, entered with an iron-bound coffer on his shoulder, which he placed before Lady Alice, with these words, "From Colchester," and flinging the key upon the pavement at her feet, strode from the chapel with a heavy step.

A moment more, and the fearful contents of that mysterious coffer were disclosed to the mournful gaze

of Lady Alice. The scarf embroidered by her own hand, and presented by her to Montfort on the eve of his first battle. The rosary and cross which he had fondly taken from her neck on the morning of their stolen nuptials. His sword, with the true love-knot still appended which she had attached to its hilt, and, last and saddest of all, those heart-rending tokens of his death, his shirt and ruff deeply stained with blood.

“And is it thus,—thus,—thus!” murmured Lady Alice, as she sat contemplating with an agony too deep,—a horror too overwhelming for tears or cries, these silent witnesses of her irreparable loss.

“No, Alice, dearest sister, believe it not,” cried Lady Eleanor; “this is, I trust, the malice of James Balders to avenge his slighted suit. Montfort was not to die till noon, and ere that time his pardon may be sealed.”

“Oh! never, never! Behold these fatal evidences that all is over with him!” said Lady Alice, pointing to the ensanguined tokens before her.

“Nay, these prove nothing beyond the fact that he is a prisoner,” said Lady Eleanor. “Alice, dear Alice, there is so strong a feeling within me that he is living, that I will away to Colchester within the hour to plead for his reprieve. Shall we not go together, gentle Alice?” continued she, taking the damp cold hand that still rested as heavily as if its pulses had ceased to beat on the fearful contents of the *coffer*.

"It would be useless now," said Lady Alice; "cruel sister! last night, you might—you might have saved him, and you would not:—now, when his heart's blood is before me, you mock me with hopes that never can be realized."

"Only promise me to be calm till you see me again," said Lady Eleanor, as she left the chapel. In half an hour's time she was on the road to Colchester.

We will not enter into the feelings of the fair traveller during her lonely journey to the head-quarters of the Parliamentary army. Hitherto, Lady Eleanor had heard much of the horrors of the war: now she, for the first time, witnessed traces of its destroying fury. The beautiful trees, and every shade of verdure in the immediate vicinity of Colchester had disappeared, and circumvallary lines of blackness and barrenness marked the ground recently occupied by the besieging army of the Parliament; and when she entered the town, the ruinous state of the houses and churches which had been rent and battered by the fierce bombardment, and their swart aspect from the sulphureous atmosphere which had so often pervaded those streets from the almost incessant discharge of artillery and fire-arms, during the latter days of the siege; and above all, the wan haggard faces of the few melancholy individuals who were visible, afforded a fearful testimony of the sufferings of Colchester and its brave defenders.

Lady Eleanor Seagrave and her escort, consisting of four of her late father's servants in deep mourning, were challenged at the various barriers that had been

erected across the streets, but the name of General Arncliffe, which she pronounced with trembling lips, served as a passport for her admittance; and as her equipage proceeded up the high street towards the castle, where she was informed she should find him, it was with difficulty that she could repress the painful agitation of her spirit. Her youth, her beauty, and deep mourning, and the circumstance of her being entirely alone, occasioned a sensation of surprise among the officers of the Parliamentary army; and she had to encounter many a bold scrutiny, mingled with looks of unwelcome admiration, when she quitted her coach and presented herself for admittance at the guarded portals of the castle. A mortal shudder came over her as her eye was unconsciously attracted by the dark red stains of blood on the stones, which denoted the spot where the recent murder of the gallant and unfortunate Lisle and Lucas had been perpetrated. At the same time the chimes of one of the neighbouring churches warned her that it was half past eleven o'clock, and the beating of drums in the quadrangle gave notice that the time was fast approaching for the performance of a similar tragedy with regard to her sister's husband, if, indeed, he were not at that time numbered with the dead.

Nothing but the strong conviction that she must make an energetic effort for the sake of that beloved sister, could have nerved the shrinking heart of Lady Eleanor to proceed under circumstances replete with such terror, and in a place which she felt to be so un-

suitable. At first, the sentinels at the castle portals, as if they guessed the nature of her errand, rudely repulsed her by crossing their partizans against her entrance, telling her, "That it would be impossible to see General Arncliffe till the execution of the cavalier Colonel was over."

"Then he yet lives, God be thanked, and I am not too late!" exclaimed Lady Eleanor, clasping her hands together, and bursting into an hysterical passion of weeping.

The soldiers exchanged looks with each other, as if moved by the emotion of the fair suppliant.

"It is the wife of Colonel Montfort," whispered one of Lady Eleanor's servants, who had heard that one of his ladies was secretly wedded to the unfortunate cavalier, and naturally concluded that she, who manifested such an active interest in his fate, must be the bride.

The sentinels were evidently touched with pity, yet fearful of the consequence of yielding to their relentings.

Lady Eleanor earnestly renewed her suit.

"Why, look ye, mistress," said one of the men, "we have no ill-will towards you or the condemned cavalier; but you are asking that which may bring us into trouble with our officers, and it can be of no use to you or him either."

"Only let me try," cried Lady Eleanor.

"Ay, ay, let her pass!" said the other.

"Are you willing to take the consequence?" asked his companion.



"Yes," replied the other ; " I have a wife of my own, you know. Pass on, my mistress," continued he to Lady Eleanor, " only you must go alone."

Leaving her servants on the platform without the castle, Lady Eleanor followed the trooper who undertook to conduct her into the presence of General Arncliffe, and with trembling steps ascended the broad staircase of that gloomy citadel, within whose walls the sentence of death had so recently been passed on her sister's husband. Nothing but the reflection that her errand was on life and death, could have impelled her forward without a single friend or attendant, to intrude herself upon him whose last words had been an injunction to forget him. Years passed in mutual estrangement, and bitterness of spirit had rolled over since Lady Eleanor Seagrave and Richard Arncliffe had looked upon each other ; and Lady Eleanor felt that it was not the love-sick village youth, to whose existence her smile or frown gave its tone of happiness or misery, whom she was about to meet, but one of the master spirits of the age — one who had demonstrated to his fellow-men the difference between the aristocracy of station, and the aristocracy of talent, and had taught both royalty and nobility to feel that Richard Arncliffe, the son of the village surgeon of Beechmont, had no less a political existence than the proudest peer of England. He was alone, seated at a table covered with papers, with all the stern gravity of deportment about him resulting from a habit of command, and the consciousness of occupying a high and important position

in the newly constituted government of England, when his musings were suddenly interrupted by the entrance of Lady Eleanor Seagrave, who, scarcely less to her own consternation than that of her long-estranged lover, was announced by the serjeant of the guard, as "the wife of Colonel Lucius Montfort."

Her deep mourning, and the extreme agitation of her appearance favoured the idea; the colour faded from the sunburned cheek of Arncliff, as his heart collapsed with the intense agony of that thought. "Arncliff! Richard Arncliff! If, indeed, I may still address you by that once familiar name," said Lady Eleanor, and faltered, for her eye sank beneath the frowning glance, with which the Parliamentary General replied to her imploring looks. How different was the language of those dark expressive eyes once. "I never could have loved him if I had always seen him thus!" thought Lady Eleanor, turning away with answering pride.

"Be seated, madam," said General Arncliff, struggling to regain the stern composure of manner which was one of the characteristics of his party, and motioning her to take a chair at a little distance from his own.

"General Arncliff," said Lady Eleanor, "the object of my present unauthorized intrusion, is to prefer a petition to you."

"I understand you, madam, and can imagine how powerful the motive must be which has procured me the honour of a visit from—from Lady Eleanor." General Arncliff left the sentence incomplete. It was evident that he was not disposed to pronounce her name.

"Are you, then, aware, General Arncliff, that I have come to solicit the life of the brave Colonel Montfort?"

"I am not the chief in command here, madam. It is to General Fairfax that your suit should be made."

"To him who has already remorselessly murdered the gallant Lisle and Lucas in cold blood! Hear me, Richard Arncliff;—changed as you are, cold, haughty, and unkind though you be, I claim the promise you once made to me, of rendering me the office of a true friend, if ever I required one at my need. That time is now come, and I charge you by the memory of those sweet days when the distinctions of rank and party were not felt by us, that you exert your powerful influence for the preservation of the life of the gallant Montfort. God knoweth how earnestly I would have pleaded for you with him, if your cases had been reversed," she added, drawing her hand across her eyes.

Those of Arncliff brightened. "I thought that the humbly born Richard Arncliff was no less an object of contempt to you than to your haughty family?" said he.

"What reason did I ever give you for thinking so?" asked Lady Eleanor.

"Ah! Eleanor, have you forgotten your cruel language when last we met?"

"Richard Arncliff, I told you then, and I repeat it, that your present perilous exaltation has neither increased the respect or love of a heart like that of Eleanor Seagrave."

"Yet you come to me as a suppliant, proud lady."

"I do, and in the full confidence of not receiving a denial."

"You ask that which is not in my gift;—the life of Lucius Montfort."

"It will not be denied to General Arncliff," said Lady Eleanor.

"That remains to be proved," returned he; "however, for your sake the effort shall be made, cost what it may," added he, as he left the room.

In less than a quarter of an hour he returned with two papers in his hand. "This," said he, presenting the first, which was torn in half, to Lady Eleanor,— "this, madam, is the cancelled warrant for your husband's execution. The other is an order for his liberation, which the council has granted at my request, and which I have now the satisfaction of putting into your hands. He was severely wounded during the last desperate sally of the besieged, but I trust you will find him able to travel with you to your father's mansion, if you purpose taking him there."

"That mansion is now Colonel Montfort's own, in consequence of his marriage with the elder co-heiress of Seagrave."

"I thought you had been the *youngest* of Lord Seagrave's daughters."

"Undoubtedly I am; but not as you suppose, the wife of Colonel Montfort. He is my sister's husband."

"And you Eleanor, you are —"

"Still free from every vow, save that which I plighted to my first, my last, my only love, in the moonlight

groves of Beechmont, one sweet midsummer eve, so many years ago now, that he hath perchance forgotten it," said Lady Eleanor, smiling.

We will not trespass upon our readers' time by recording the rejoinder of Richard Arncliffe. Suffice it to say that the public acknowledgment of the marriage of Lady Alice Seagrave with the pardoned cavalier, was in due time followed by a union between Lady Eleanor and the Parliamentary General, through whose intercession the gallant Colonel had been preserved from the fate of his brave companions in arms, Sir George Lisle, and Sir Charles Lucas.

## THE PAINTER.

BY W. H. HARRISON.

OUR devoted regard to the fairer sex, not less than a desire to gratify the curiosity which our Frontispiece, we would fain hope, is calculated to inspire, has induced us, of all our dramatis personæ, to present first to the reader, the heroine of our tale. That the said heroine was a *rara avis*, not in this lower and breathing world of realities, but in the world of romance, we can adduce no more satisfactory evidence, than the fact of her having her fair and full share of the faults which are the inheritance of humanity. Beautiful, to a degree beyond the power even of our gifted artist to describe to the eye, she certainly was, if the elements of beauty be a brow to which a phrenologist would bow with doting homage, an eye for which the fire-worshipper would abandon the god of his idolatry, and a form which would convince Phidias himself of the folly of endeavouring to perpetuate in marble what His hand hath been pleased to create of that frailer and more perishable material—clay.

Caroline Marston had been left an orphan in infancy,

and thus had never been conscious of the care of a parent. The gentleman to whose guardianship she had been bequeathed had, as respected both her person and her property, acquitted himself affectionately and conscientiously of his trust ; having taken her under his own roof, from the moment that her last surviving parent resigned her to his charge ; while he had so husbanded her little property, that before she attained her majority, she was rendered independent of the world ; that is to say, relieved from the necessity of embracing any of the few professions to which well educated females are but too frequently compelled to resort for a livelihood.

The society to which, through the connections of her guardian, Mr. Wentworth, she became introduced, embraced some of the first families in the county, and thus, exclusively of the natural grace of her manner, she had acquired the ease and polish which mark the well-bred young woman. And yet, setting aside her personal attractions, which, as we have already stated, were of no common order, Caroline Marston, at the period at which we first made her acquaintance, was not very distinguished, nor altogether a favourite, in the circle in which she moved. There was a nonchalance, nay a kind of indolence in her habit, which argued little intellectual energy. True it is, she was a great reader, but as far as the result was concerned, it was impossible to conjecture to which of the many descriptions of readers she belonged. We remember, in the days of our boyhood, once to have attended a lecture on the Belles Lettres, delivered

by one whose eloquence made an impression on our memory, which time we believe will never efface ; we allude to Coleridge, who with great quaintness, but equal truth, reduced readers to four classes. One he compared to an hour-glass ; for what they read, he alleged, ran in, and ran out, and left not a grain behind. Another class he likened to a jelly bag, which retained all that was gross and foul, suffering all that was pure and valuable to escape. For a third description, he found a parallel in a sponge, which absorbed every thing, and gave it back again, only a little dirtier. The fourth and last order, however, he compared to the slaves working in the mines of Golconda, who cast aside all that was worthless, and retained only the pure gem.

We know not in which of these classes to assign a place to our heroine ; she read much, but to what purpose, we must leave to be gathered from our brief and imperfect sketch of her history.

Mr. Wentworth was a good man, and very fond of his ward, but withal prudent and far-casting ; and thus it was with no slight degree of uneasiness that he observed an unequivocal attachment on the part of his youngest son for Caroline Marston ; while he had reasons, amounting almost to conviction, to conclude, that the feeling was reciprocal. Now Mr. Wentworth, although possessing an unencumbered estate, and holding a prominent position in his county, was not a rich man. His family was large, and his landed property being entailed, he had not much to spare in starting



his younger sons in the world. Henry Wentworth, the youngest, had been well educated, but, whether from indecision on his own part or his father's, had arrived at years of discretion without having chosen, or been urged to choose a profession. He was a man of great animal spirits, gentlemanly manners, kind, and open-hearted, and withal, possessed of a face and figure which might well draw a second look from the most fastidious belle in the county.

That Mr. Wentworth should regard with apprehension an attachment of a serious character between Henry and Caroline, must not be referred altogether to worldly feelings, when it is considered, that her income, not more than sufficient to support herself in respectability, would afford but a scanty provision in the event of her union with one, to whom he could give little or nothing, and for whom he, when too late, regretted he had not sought a profession. Direct interference between the young people, he was man of the world enough to feel, would be worse than useless; he therefore resorted to the interest which he happened to possess, to procure for Henry an appointment abroad, and thus remove him from attractions which were likely to prove so detrimental to his worldly prosperity.

Now it happened, that Henry, with plenty of time on his hands, a good horse at his command, and Caroline Marton to make love to, was eminently satisfied with matters as they were; and if any thing could induce him to abandon the agreeable monotony of his life, it would have been a commission in a crack regiment.

Thus it will be very readily imagined, that he did not receive, with exuberant joy, his father's announcement of his having applied to an influential East India Director for a writership, which, he added, as a matter of course, Henry would be but too happy to accept.

Overwhelmed with consternation, Henry Wentworth hastened to pour out his grief at the feet of his lady-love, who, whatever graver emotions she might indulge on the occasion, was by no means disposed to part from the playmate of her childhood and the companion of her youth.

Accordingly, sympathizing heartily in his feelings, and anxious to avert a catastrophe so fatal to the happiness of one of them at least, she promised to exert the little influence she possessed with her guardian in order to induce him to abandon the project. We have said that Caroline exhibited an indolence of disposition—a repugnance to exertion of any kind, but of all things, as she openly avowed, she hated “a scene,” and thus her affection for Henry may be held to have been of no ordinary intensity, since it compelled her to broach this somewhat delicate subject to her guardian.

I should premise, that the apprehensions entertained by Mr. Wentworth of an “untoward” match on the part of his son, had never altered his deportment towards his ward, who had always treated him with an affectionate familiarity which the natural kindness of his heart induced him rather to encourage than repress.

“And so, sir,” she said to him one day, while they

were walking together in the park which surrounded the old-fashioned manorial residence, "you are going to send poor Henry abroad!"

"True, Caroline," was the reply; "he has been too long idle, and it is time that he look to some means of maintenance; for as a younger son, you know, he has little to expect when Providence shall remove me. What objection have you to it, that you look so sorrowful on the occasion?"

"Simply that the thought of it makes Henry very miserable; and, indeed, I think it very cruel," rejoined the maiden.

"Caroline," said Mr. Wentworth, after a short pause, "I will be candid with you, and I am sure that a girl of your sense will take what I am about to say in good part, particularly as I impute blame on the occasion to none but myself. I ought to have foreseen the attachment to which a residence under the same roof was likely to give rise, an attachment, apparent enough on one side, which, with reference to your respective circumstances in life, cannot but be destructive of the happiness of each, and therefore I have resolved on sending him abroad."

"Really, sir," retorted Caroline, with unwonted animation, "I must solemnly protest against a doctrine which makes love for me a transportable offence. I desire votaries, but not victims, and if your bill once pass into a law, I shall not have a worshipper at my shrine."

"My dear," said Mr. Wentworth, "I do not jest,

nor does it become you to do so, or rather to affect it, on such a subject."

"Indeed, sir," was the reply, "I was never more in earnest in my life; and I do hope that you will pause before you commit your son to a pursuit in life to which he has an unconquerable repugnance."

"Caroline, be honest," rejoined her guardian, "and acknowledge that you plead not for him alone. Your own heart will tell you—"

"Nay," said the damsel, evading so close an application of the argument, "I never ask my heart any questions, for I have no reliance whatever on its replies."

The conversation, much, we believe, to the relief of the young lady, was here interrupted; for, emerging from a clump of trees through which they had been walking, they came suddenly upon a stranger, who appeared to be engaged in making a sketch, in which the mansion was a prominent feature. The artist rose as the others approached him, and apologizing for what he feared might be a trespass on their privacy, was about to shift his quarters. Mr. Wentworth, however, somewhat flattered perhaps by his domain having been made the subject of the sketch, politely begged that he would not disturb himself, and finally requested a sight of his portfolio, alleging that his fair companion took some interest in the art.

The stranger was a young man, about five-and-twenty, rather above the middle height, of a complexion rather embrowned by the sun than naturally dark, for

when he removed his hat, his high and expansive forehead was as white and smooth as marble, contrasting agreeably with the deep auburn hair that curled luxuriantly around it.

The artist submitted his portfolio to their inspection readily enough ; but Caroline thought that there was an air of indifference in his manner of doing it, which indicated that either he thought little of his performances, or set small store by their opinion of them. Whether Mr. Wentworth was really a judge of their excellence, or that, as we before hinted, his self-love was gratified by the nature of the subject, I know not, but certain it is, that he invited the stranger up to the mansion ; an invitation, however, which, although courteously acknowledged, was declined ; and immediately afterwards, the painter, gathering up his materials, put his portfolio under his arm, and, with a slight bow, passed the confines of the park, and entered a small cottage on the opposite side of the high-road.

Induced by curiosity to make some inquiries regarding his new acquaintance, Mr. Wentworth gleaned that he had been a sort of lodger in the widow's cottage for a week or two previous to the meeting we have described ; that he occupied two rooms, lived plainly, almost abstemiously, paid the rent and all other demands upon him with scrupulous exactness, and had greatly attached his hostess by the quiet urbanity of his manner, and his repugnance to giving trouble, the latter, perhaps, being one of the most prominent characteristics of the true gentleman.

By degrees, the apparently natural coldness of the stranger's manner yielded to the desire which Mr. Wentworth evinced for his society, and, on one or two occasions, he passed an hour at the hall; and in the course of conversation, alleged as the reason of his protracted stay in that part of the country, that he was preparing a series of views for the gallery of a nobleman, the Earl of E——, of whose reputation as a patron of the arts, and particularly of young artists, Mr. Wentworth had often heard.

Thus it happened that a sort of intimacy sprung up between the limner and the Wentworths, and, at length, it was not difficult for a keen observer to perceive, even through the frost of the stranger's reserve, that his admiration of the beautiful in Nature was not confined to the inanimate portion of her works. Of this fact Caroline herself became aware, for as he was turning over the contents of his portfolio in her presence, in quest of a sketch he was desirous of exhibiting, her eye caught a portrait, which, notwithstanding his endeavours to conceal it, she instantly recognised as designed for herself. A flush, arising probably from a mixed feeling of gratification and displeasure, suffused her cheek at the discovery, while in a half-serious, half-playful manner, she said, "I hope that subject is not included in your commission, for if it be, I must protest against being hanged, even in the good company which grace the gallery of your patron."

"Miss Wentworth," replied the painter, in some confusion, "I fear you will think I have taken a liberty

which circumstances do not warrant ; but I assure you it was done from memory, and if you will allow me to retain the sketch, I pledge you my word—if you will take the gage of a stranger—that it shall never pass out of my possession.”

Whether this assurance quieted the lady’s fears, or gratified her vanity, it is not for us to determine ; but he was allowed not only to retain the sketch, but afterwards to finish it from the life ; “subject,” however, as the lawyers have it, “to the terms, conditions, and stipulations, hereinbefore mentioned.”

We will let the reader a little more into our confidence, and inform him that every day of the artist’s sojourn in the neighbourhood added to the interest he felt in the graceful girl to whom he had been thus accidentally introduced. But while lingering within the spell of her enchantment, he could not disguise from himself the peril to which his future peace of mind was exposed. That she was, if not engaged, warmly attached to young Wentworth, he could have no doubt ; and that Henry was affectionately fond of her, was a matter of notoriety ; indeed, so far from disguising his feelings on the subject, he appeared to glory in displaying them.

Our painter, it was quite evident, was a man of no ordinary stamp of mind ; his reading had been extensive ; he had travelled much, and he loved his art to a degree of enthusiasm which was often expressed in language of extraordinary eloquence. He had remarked, on more than one occasion, when

he had been descanting on the beauty of a prospect, that the eye of his fair auditor would kindle, and sometimes a flush would come over her cheek, as if she had caught his ardour. Hence he was often betrayed into the hope, that beneath the indolence and listlessness which he had lamented to observe in her character, there might be hidden an energy of soul and thought, requiring for its development only society of a more intellectual character than that in which she moved.

There is perhaps no dearer occupation on earth than cultivating the minds of those we love, and whom we love the more, as we do our garden, as each fresh blossom opens to our eye. That the delight of such a task, in the instance before us, had occurred to our artist, we do not deny ; but the thought was ever checked by his reflection on their relative positions. "She is engaged," thought he, "to an amiable, honest-hearted youth, who loves her affectionately in return ; and what right have I to interrupt the even course of their happiness by inspiring her with tastes which may open her eyes to his intellectual deficiencies ?" The argument was an admirable one, but he found it no easy matter to reduce it to practice ; and he often paused in the midst of one of his enthusiastic dissertations, as he observed its effect on his auditor.

It happened one evening that Caroline encountered the painter alone in the park, while he was endeavouring to select a spot from whence to sketch a scene which he had heard her express a wish to see transferred to canvass. At the moment, a part of her dress became



entangled in a briar, and the artist stepped hastily forward with the intention of disengaging it ; but in so doing, his foot slipped into a cart-rut which had been concealed by the overgrowing grass, and being unable at the moment to withdraw it, he fell on his side, and so severely sprained his ankle, that he lay without motion on the ground, while a deadly paleness passed over his countenance.

With a shriek, and a bound which left the entangled portion of her dress in the safe custody of the bramble, she was in an instant at his side. The injury, although it did not amount to a dislocation, was attended by such acute agony, that he was unable to articulate a word in answer to her hurried inquiries. Severe, however, as was the pain he endured, the expressions of tenderness which the agitation of the moment extorted from her lips, fell not unregarded on his ears ; and when he was so far recovered as to be able to express his acknowledgments he said ;

“ How shall I thank you, Miss Marston, for this sympathy for a stranger ? ”

“ Nay, Sir,” rejoined Caroline, with a deep blush as the words in which that sympathy had been conveyed recurred to her memory ; “ not quite a stranger ; and even if you were, the circumstance should not deprive you of the commiseration which so painful an accident must naturally inspire.”

“ I shall not regret the result of my clumsiness, Miss Marston, since it has drawn from your lips words which my memory will long treasure.”

Caroline blushed more deeply, and said hesitatingly, "Really, Sir, I am not aware—"

"For pity's sake recall them not," exclaimed the painter, with passionate earnestness; "let me live on in the dear delusion until I am awakened from my dream, —a blessed but a brief one—by your marriage bell."

"My marriage bell!" exclaimed the maiden, with some surprise, but with a degree of calmness to which she had in manner forced herself: "What can my marriage bell ever be to you?"

"The knell of my happiness," was the reply.

"Indeed, sir!" returned the lady; "you speak in enigmas, and assuredly appear to have information which, as I am the party chiefly interested, it is a little singular I do not possess myself. Who told you I was about to be married?"

"It is somewhat difficult," said the other, "to individualize one of the hundred tongues of Rumour, which speaks of your union with Mr. Henry Wentworth as a matter settled beyond all doubt."

"I am much indebted to Rumour, then," rejoined Caroline, "for giving to me so excellent and amiable a person, who notwithstanding will never be anything more to me than he is at present."

"But he loves you passionately," was the exclamation of the painter, "or I am greatly mistaken."

"He has some such notion himself," said the maiden, with a slight smile; "but you are both wrong. He fancies he sees in me qualities which would constitute his happiness; but he does not know me."

"Indeed!" returned the artist, with unaffected surprise; "then he must have made marvellously bad use of his time, for if I am rightly informed, you have been known to each other from childhood."

"I do not impugn my friend Henry's quickness of perception," said Caroline; "for long acquaintance does not necessarily involve the knowledge of character: to know a person is one thing, to study him another. Henry and I differ very essentially in many points."

"And yet," was the reply, "I see you joining in the same pursuits, and mingling in the same society."

"Because I have no other society to mingle in," said the maiden. "True it is, the circle in which we move is wealthy, and as respectable as any in the county; but less discernment than I give you credit for, would easily discover that it is not an intellectual society. Do not misunderstand me; I am not a blue-stocking; but I have read other books than novels, and studied other things than quadrilles and gallopades."

"And yet," resumed the artist, "I see you an unconstrained participator in the amusements of the society to which you belong; nor, in your general bearing among your friends, can I recognise any want of sympathy in their tastes."

"You mean to say," returned the lady, "that I do not reply to an inquiry after my health by a quotation from Dante, or solve a question as to the figure of a quadrille, by a reference to Euclid. To a certain extent, one must trifle among triflers or be dumb, and consequently disagreeable. You know there is a Latin

proverb which I might quote, in support of my maxim. I cannot shut myself up in my chamber for ever, and if I go into society, there is neither reason nor good-nature in confining my conversation to subjects which are interesting only to myself."

A pause ensued in the dialogue, but in that brief interval what new and ecstatic thoughts crowded on the bosom of the painter ! The most precious was the knowledge that she was not betrothed to Henry Wentworth, and that consequently her heart might yet be free. The next "comfortable thought" was that there was in her heart a well of deep feeling, which, like a fountain in a wood, though overgrown with flowers, and, it may be, some stray weeds, is yet pure and bright beneath.

The nature of his accident was such as to preclude any very rapid progression, nor do we think, that had no such impediment existed, our artist would have felt any disposition to shorten the interview by quickening his pace. New hopes were fluttering at his heart ; but anxious as he was to resolve them into certainties, he yet hesitated to provoke a further explanation, lest those hopes should be changed to despair. They were, notwithstanding the slow pace at which they had walked, getting near to the mansion ; the artist, dreading the agony of suspense, to which, if he parted without ascertaining his destiny, he would, for some hours, be subjected, paused, and said, with a voice which, though somewhat faltering from agitation, had lost none of its full, deep music :

"*Miss Marston, may I hope that the blessed words*

which so lately fell like balm upon my senses, had yet a deeper source than the occasion which immediately called them forth—nay, hear me; I know that the hope is presumption, but, oh! if you cannot bid me be happy, at least pardon my offence, if offence it be to love you beyond all the treasures which earth can promise, or ambition sigh for.”

As he spoke he fixed his eyes on the face of the lovely being beside him, and saw there agitation and a tear—an expression rather of perplexity than displeasure. There was a strength of character about Caroline perfectly in unison with feminine softness of heart and manner, that enabled her to rally against the feelings which the address of her companion had excited. Her hand was resting on his arm as he spoke; he ventured to lay his own upon it; it was gently but immediately withdrawn, and with some dignity she replied:

“Sir, I will not affect to undervalue the attentions which you have been pleased to show me, and I should be unjust did I not acknowledge my gratitude for the respect you have displayed in the rare courage with which you have told me of my faults; but as you so lately said,—I repeat it not offensively,—you are a stranger.”

“I know and bitterly feel it,” was the reply; “and I do not ask you to plight your faith to an unknown, and for any proof that you have to the contrary, it may be an unworthy, man,—certainly unworthy of the high boon to which I aspire. Yet am I what I seem,—a

painter—a poor one it is true ; and all I ask is, that if I prove to you that my poverty is not coupled with dishonour, you will allow me to encourage the hopes to which your own sweet words have given birth.”

“ Admitting that I could do so,” said Caroline, “ you have referred to your own poverty, but you have forgotten that I am not rich.”

“ Nay,” answered the artist, “ I am not mad enough to despise that competence, the absence of which must necessarily embitter any situation in life ; but if you will allow me to hope, I shall pursue my profession with an ardour proportionate to the value of the glorious prize to which I aspire ; and with the favour of the nobleman, to whom you have heard me allude,—and I am not likely to forfeit it,—I must succeed.”

As he spoke these words, his fine, manly, and very handsome features were lit up with unwonted animation, and there was an openness and candour in their expression which would have won the confidence of one more chary of giving credence to appearances than Caroline Marston.

Her reply was, “ I have no right to doubt your sincerity, and I do not. More, however, than the probation you ask I cannot grant ; I may not encourage you to hope, but I will not bid you despair.”

At this period of the conversation they had arrived at the hall, when the painter, declining the cordial invitation of its hospitable owner to pass the rest of the evening with him, returned to his cottage with feelings of a very different kind from those with which

he quitted it. And yet those feelings were of a character. Lovers are certainly most unreasoning beings. He had obtained more than he could to gain on first broaching the subject—an acknowledgment that her heart was free—nay, that she was not indifferent to him; and yet he was not satisfied. Through the warp and woof of his joy, there remained threads of doubt, which perplexed him and troubled his dreams.

However, the stimulus imparted by the encouragement he had received induced him, on the following day, to prepare for his departure, in order, doubtless, to commence that professional career, which was to lead him to fame and Caroline Marston.

On his taking leave of Mr. Wentworth, the nobleman expressed great interest in his future studies, adding that he was about to visit London towards the autumn, and should be much gratified by the opportunity of seeing the paintings of those scenes, of which our artist had made sketches. Another nobleman informed him that, by that time, all those sketches he should be enabled to finish would be in the possession of the nobleman he had alluded to; but, he concluded by drawing a card from his case, it would be necessary for Mr. Wentworth to present that at the time, to ensure admission to himself and any friend he might choose to take with him.

Of course, not having avowed his sentiments to the young lady's friends, our artist could take no more than a formal leave of her; but in doing so, he fi

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—and perhaps it was only fancy—that he had never seen her look so sad: of one thing, however, he was certain, namely, that she returned the pressure of his hand at parting; and upon the meagre diet of that assurance, his love luxuriated for the next fortnight.

Well, time flew by, as fly it will, whether we make love or mischief, kiss or quarrel; and the leaves which our anonymous artist—for he had not yet got a name—left green upon the boughs were most of them of another colour, and *lying*—as leaves very often do—under the trees. In the mean time, the good folks at the hall had heard nothing of their acquaintance, the painter, to the great marvel and mystification of the old gentleman, who, so exalted was his opinion of our hero's ability, and the beauty of the subjects he had selected, thought, simple man! that London would be ringing with the praises of the scenery of — Park, and the talents of the artist who had immortalized them on canvass. Whatever were Caroline's thoughts, she kept them to herself, and expressed nothing but her wonder when Mr. Wentworth would put in execution his intention of taking her to London. He, however, who thought more of Joe Mantons and Dartford gunpowder, than of the bow and arrows which symbolize the best shot of heathen or modern times, could not think of quitting the country until after the first week of pheasant-shooting; and thus it happened that it was quite the end of the month sacred to double-barrels and double-ale, before our heroine and her guardian



were introduced to the sights, sounds, and smoke of London.

We will, however, do our rural friend the justice to say that, when he had achieved the journey, he was quite as eager as his ward to pay a visit to the gallery in which they were led to suppose they should see the pictures which, as well as the painter, had so much interested them. Accordingly they presented themselves and the artist's card at the door of the Earl of E——, and after some little delay, were admitted to a sight of his collection.

They passed through two or three rooms which, although lined with gems of art, contained not the gems which had a superior brilliancy in their eyes, namely the series of views of —— Park. On entering the fourth room, however, they discovered that the painter had told them truth. There they were, in all the glory of gold frames and fresh paint, and so admirably faithful, that Mr. Wentworth uttered an exclamation of wonder ; and it is impossible to say how far his ecstasies might have carried him, if he had not discovered that Caroline and the attendant were not the only witnesses of his raptures. Great, however, was his surprise in recognising his old acquaintance in an individual who, in a dressing gown, with pallet on thumb, and brush in hand, was engaged in putting a few finishing touches to a freshly painted picture.

Our artist, having motioned to the attendant to withdraw, advanced to the visitors, by each of whom he

was cordially greeted; the old gentleman remarking on his singular good fortune in meeting with the painter as well as the pictures. Some conversation ensued, referring partly to the subject before them, and partly to the events which had marked their intercourse in the country; when Caroline's eye happened to rest upon the picture on which the artist had been employed, and a cloud passed over her brow as she perceived that it was the portrait of herself, to which we have already alluded.

"I thought, sir," she said with some coldness, "that you pledged yourself, that that picture should never pass out of your possession."

"It is true, I did so pledge myself," was the reply.

"Then how is it that I see it here?" rejoined the lady. "You have deceived me."

"Nay, is it not still in my possession? Can I not take it away with me? In preferring to finish it by this light, instead of by that of my own studio, I am not aware that I violate my pledge."

"Indeed," said the damsel, a flush of indignation passing over her cheek as she spoke; "this is a subterfuge, of which I could not have conceived you capable;" and the bitter consciousness of having been deceived by the being, whom, notwithstanding the caution with which she received his avowal of attachment, she had clothed with every attribute of manly virtue, struck a pang to her heart, and brought the tear into her eye.

The painter, by this time, had laid aside his tools

of trade, and stepping up to the indignant and mortified fair one, he took her reluctant hand, and looking with his smile of fascination in her face, said ;

“ But suppose the peer and the painter are one ? ”

Caroline snatched away her hand, and looking full at the speaker, exclaimed, “ Impossible ! ”

“ But true, nevertheless,” was the calm reply, the correctness of which was confirmed by the entrance of a servant, who prefaced his errand by “ My Lord ; ” and who having retired, the earl continued : “ Nor in this, Caroline—for I will now venture to call you so—have I deceived you ? I told you I was a painter, a very *poor* one, as these performances would convince the most sceptical. I did not tell you that I was not a peer as well. But my probation is ended, and with the permission of my kind friend and hospitable host here, I claim the prize.”

As he spoke he took the hand which had been so recently withdrawn from his own. Mr. Wentworth, who had just emerged from his mystification, and began to comprehend the state of affairs, called Caroline “ a sly puss,” and congratulated her in the same breath.

Affairs took their natural course ; Caroline became a countess ; and so, good night ! my tale is told.

## THE BRIDE.

BY OCTAVIAN BLEWITT.

THERE is an unadorned and nameless grave  
Where southern birds are singing, and the sky,  
Of brilliant azure deeper than the wave,  
Perfumed with orange, breathes its fragrancy  
Like incense o'er the heart. But who was she,  
So typified in death ? her fate thus sung  
By nature's minstrels, where the rivalry  
Of fresh-blown flowers upon the sod has sprung,  
To mark where sleeps in peace the innocently young ?

She loved, beloved and loving : Beauty's dower  
Was the sole fortune of that artless maid ;  
Her spirit withered like a summer flower,  
Before the winter of the heart, that made  
All desolate. Her young affections weighed  
Too heavy on her gentleness ; the gloom  
Of the dark night of sorrow bowed her head,  
With woes too ponderous for her living bloom,  
And, overwhelmed, she sunk to share her bridal tomb.

Peace be to thee, thou heart of hearts ! united  
With him in death whose love on earth was thine.  
From thy bright form that watched so oft delighted  
His every look, the while they bade thee twine  
The garland of fresh hopes, that they might shine  
Amidst this weary wilderness of strife,  
When all beside was like the mountain pine  
In winter's blast—no arm with sorrow rife  
Shall separate the soul that called thee *his* in life.

How beautiful is sleep ! and death no less,  
When slumbers innocent and guileless love :  
Its dirge the song of joyous happiness,  
The carol of the lark :—each glade and grove  
Filled with a thousand choristers who rove  
From morn to eve, and all the livelong day  
Are ceaseless minstrels, till the earth has wove  
Her votive wreath of flowers, and evening grey  
Weeps his soft dews where loving hearts decay.

How beautiful such tears ! the dews of heaven—  
How beautiful such wreaths ! the gift of flowers  
That speak of peace ! refreshing e'en the leaven  
Of dull humanity, like summer showers  
Clothing the earth with brightness. There are powers  
And influences in these which know no bound.  
Beloved by those we love, they bring back hours  
Of living happiness ; and the deep wound  
Of parting is forgot when we have such around.

*Dresden, 27th Dec. 1838.*

ART OF DETOX AND  
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## THE RENEGADE'S DAUGHTER.

BY T. K. HERVEY.

SHE sitteth there, this summer eve,  
That lonely thing, an orphan girl,  
Though wears her lip its wreath of smiles,  
Her brow its wreath of pearl.—  
If cherished hopes that in her breast  
Had voices, heard like prophecies,  
Be silent now—dead oracles  
That utter no replies,—  
If flowers, that to her spirit gave  
Its early scent and loving hue,  
Have drooped within her heart of hearts,  
And perished where they grew,—  
Yet hers the age when hearts are filled  
With those sweet thoughts, whose blessed spells,  
Like incense out of flowers distilled,  
Survive the parent bells.

The precious, unreturning years,  
When sorrow brightens what it spoils;  
Like morning dews that come in tears,  
To fill the earth with smiles,—  
When youth—the fairy—sings the song  
With which the fairies lull the wave,  
The soul's Morgana, ere she fades  
Into that ocean-grave,  
From whence her form but re-appears,  
Like some dim dream, in after years.  
Oh! *not* the age when happy hearts  
Are all like Edens fresh from God,  
That, like the young and sinless earth,  
By angel feet are trod,  
While not a sadder sound is heard  
Than the far singing of some bird!  
*That* paradise she lost, the day  
That death came to her palace door,  
And from her bosom far away  
Her gentle mother bore :—  
We pass, the hour we learn to mourn,  
From Eden, never to return!—  
But to the world that seemed so wide,  
Then opening on her orphan eyes,  
The spirit followed by her side  
That followed from the skies ;—  
*Youth* left not when her mother left,  
But on a somewhat fainter wing,  
Still poured his music round her path,  
And showed her many a spring,

That played amid her sunny hours,  
And made *her* world a world of flowers.  
And if, at times, she could not hear  
His singing, for her childish sighs,  
Nor see the roses, for the tear  
Within her own dark eyes,  
By many a token still she *felt*  
The presence of her joyous guide,  
And still her spirit knew there dwelt  
An angel by its side ;—  
As perfumes tell, at midnight hours,  
Unerring tales of unseen flowers !  
*One* only fountain in her heart  
He could not sweeten by his art,  
*One* stream of thought that—spring and rill—  
Was Mara to her spirit still,  
Along whose margin dimly strayed,  
In memory's hour, her mother's shade !  
But then *another* angel came,  
And touched the waters with his spear,  
And if their wave ran bitter still,  
It grew most bright and clear ;  
Till, far in that sad fountain's breast,  
Rose sainted visions to her eyes,  
And clearer than in all the rest  
She saw the distant skies !  
Beneath *his* teaching, memory's show  
Presented to her musing eye,  
For every withered flower below,  
A new-born star on high ;—


Till she could wear the smile she wears,  
Even by that very fount of tears !

And these, to-night, are by her side,—  
Religion with her snowy vest,  
And youth that, in his garb of pride,  
Makes gay her earthly breast :  
And they have taught her still to smile,  
If that young heart be sometimes sad,  
And, though an orphan, look the while  
As spirits look when glad,—  
To gather flowers by bitter waves,  
And scatter roses over graves !

She sitteth there, this summer night,  
A *more* than orphan girl,  
Though wears her lip its wreath of smiles,  
Her brow its wreath of pearl !  
Though lulling waves and whispering leaves,  
Like those of old Dodona's grove,  
Breathe to her soul, on silent eves,  
The oracles of Love ;  
Though singing bird and sighing flower  
Are Genii to her lonely hour,  
And all things wait upon her will,—  
She is a worse than orphan, still !  
An orphan, though, in father-pride,  
Her father sitteth by her side,  
And to her soul a soft low sigh  
Tells that her mother's shade is nigh !

Strange sounds steal by, that nightly haunt  
The dim deep Adriatic caves,  
And, like an ancient mariner,  
The moon is in its waves ;  
The waters, with a wailing sound,  
Go sighing through their flutes of stone,  
As if the voice of perished years  
Were speaking by their tone ;  
And evening sitteth spectrally  
On that old city of the sea !  
The fainting breeze, that brings the breath  
Of roses on its wings,  
Sinks on her lyre, and dies in song,  
Amid its perfumed strings.  
Old sounds are in her ear—old thoughts  
Are wandering through her heart,  
Though visions born of later days  
Have there their precious part :  
The *genius* of the hour and scene  
Hath to her gentle spirit crept,  
The things that are, with what *have* been,  
The loved—the lost—the wept ;  
All feelings quaint, though very sweet,  
Unto a pleasant tune,  
Have met—as fairies used to meet—  
Beneath the midnight moon ;  
And tones are murmuring in her ear,  
None other—*but* the angels—hear !  
*One* only thought—a thought of *him*,

Her sweet and shining fancies mars,  
Like Merope whose star was dim  
Amid her sister stars !—  
One thought for which the angel thing  
That sitteth by her mother's tomb  
Can give no healing from its wing ;—  
So dull and deep its gloom,  
The very lights *that* angel bore  
But make it darker than before !  
Her father sitteth by her side,  
Beloved, but a stranger now ;—  
What means the Moslem turban, tied  
O'er that Venetian brow ?  
Why doth the spirit in him work  
At once of Judas and the Turk ?  
Oh ! recreant to his God and her,  
In *every* sense a wanderer !  
The waited-for—how long !—hath come  
Back to his palace—*not* his home.  
For ever lost !—the western star  
Hath led him homeward, o'er the waves ;  
But oh ! a shadow, deeper far  
Than ever fell from graves,  
Hath dropt its curtain drear and dim  
Betwixt his orphan child and him !  
What spirit stands between their hearts ?  
He clasps her as he clasped of yore,—  
These beat together, as of old,  
But mingle never more.  
Alas for him !—alas for thee !



Oh ! help, in this thine hour of need !  
In thy bright palace of the sea,  
An orphan now indeed !  
For all thy young and sunny spring,  
And wild sweet thoughts that round it roll,  
Thou art that very saddest thing,  
An orphan *of the soul* !

But thine the age, when hope hath wings  
That bear it far above despair ;  
And joy hath many hidden springs  
That seek the upper air,  
And into sunshine leap and play,  
When fountains old are dried away.  
Too young to feed on fond regret,  
Or turn those glad bright eyes,  
Though lighted there, for comfort yet  
Unto the far-off skies !  
Some loving glance of this dim earth  
Shall yet awake thy heart ;  
Fond accents strike its well of mirth,  
And bid the waters start ;  
And human hopes and home be given  
To mingle with thy dreams of heaven !  
And one there is who lingereth near,  
And gazeth on that bright-eyed girl,—  
The wreath, of smiles, upon her lip,  
Upon her brow, of pearl,  
As though *he* felt such looks and forms  
Had missions for this lower earth,—



To be the rainbow 'mid its storms,  
The angel by its hearth ;  
That orphan tears which love had dried  
Made brighter sunshine for the bride,  
And she, when lost her daughter-life,  
Might be that dearer thing—a wife,  
A name and spell more precious far  
Than the lost gems of Istakhar :  
Oh, sent from heaven !—as came, of yore,  
In mortal garb, those spirit things  
That paused beside some patriarch's door,  
To fold their shining wings ;  
Then sat and made his chamber bright,  
'Mid murmurs tuned like lutes above,  
With glimpses of that upper light  
Whose name on earth is love,—  
Till the rapt patriarch's soul confest  
He had an angel for his guest !

The city of the hundred isles  
Is like some dreamer's phantasy,—  
A palace hung by fairy hands  
Betwixt the moon and sea !  
The sunny lark hath sunk to sleep,  
And the daylight flowers are furled ;  
And low, dim, mystic murmurs creep,  
As from a far-off world,—  
Sounds such as, faint and far apart,  
When all the winds are still,

Come gliding to the lonely heart,  
Upon the lonely hill.  
The air is scented with the breath  
Of the fragrant lemon tree,  
And to the terrace underneath  
The moon-lit water murmureth  
Softly and soothingly.  
And there she sits, this summer eve,  
A happy though an orphan girl,  
A wreath, upon her lip, of smiles,  
Upon her brow, of pearl ;—  
A thing half love, half loneliness,  
At this still hour she seems,—  
How like the fair and phantom forms  
That come to us in dreams !

Oh ! hope is like the cuckoo's song,  
Upon its high and leafy spar,  
Heard everywhere, though never long,  
And ever *from afar* !  
But then, the cuckoo singeth still  
Amid the blaze of light,  
While hope is like the nightingale,—  
It singeth in the night :—  
And now, beside her sire unblest,  
*That* bird is whispering in her breast.  
And *love* hath spoken to her heart,  
(That love should *ever* speak in vain,  
When, like the aloe that has bloomed,  
It never blooms again !)

Love, covered all with rose-like flowers,  
A fragrant, but an *early* thing,  
The spirit's almond-tree that buds  
And blossoms in its spring.  
So she hath struck her old guitar,  
Beneath the quiet moon,  
And bowed the fond hearts beating there  
Unto an ancient tune :  
The echoes of her song have died  
Along the distant sea ;  
And, underneath its brow of pride,  
Her father's spirit hath replied,  
Touched by that golden key,—  
For all it hath of undefiled  
Loves yet to listen to his child.

“ Methinks my mother's voice to-night,  
Is whispering through the whispering leaves ;  
I hear it often by this light,  
In the long summer eves,—  
A pleasant voice, though mournful quite ;—  
To-night, methinks it *grieves* !

“ The vision is not what it was,  
When memory seems her form to see ;  
She looketh sadly—and, alas !  
(And yet this *cannot* be,)  
My mother's shadow seems to pass  
Betwixt my sire and me !

' And when, as erst, I lift my hand,  
To lay it on my father's heart,  
I feel as 'twere an icy band,  
That makes the pulses start ;  
And there I see my mother stand,  
And wave *us two apart* !

' I go !—A fond and faithful heart  
Hath waited for thy daughter long, —  
To play for him the gentle part,  
*She* played our halls among :  
Hark ! even now, —oh memory's art ! —  
Methought I heard her song !

' Her happy song of other days,  
Bright days ! —my father ! didst *thou* hear ?  
Oh ! hours and hours, her low, sweet lays  
Are murmuring in mine ear !  
Thine answer *then* was ever praise ;—  
Thou answerest with a tear !

' Oh ! fling the foulness from thy breast,  
The turban from thy Christian brow,  
That I upon its native nest  
May lay my head, as now,  
And find—what now I find not—rest ;  
I cannot, for thy vow !

" Farewell ! no kindred heart I leave  
In our old *palace of the sea*—

My childhood's home !—I may not grieve,  
To go from it and thee.

Oh ! come thou home, some quiet eve,  
To God—my love—and me !”

A sound, as if a spirit's wing  
Had struck a sigh from out the string,  
Passed dimly through the hushed saloon,  
And died away beneath the moon !

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TO H. C.

WITH MY FIRST BOOK.

THOU wilt not spurn my gift ; although it be  
My earliest venture on that sea of storms  
Where young Ambition fondly dares to launch  
His argosy of hope in quest of fame.  
My voyage hath been a long one ; and, alas !  
My bark, unpiloted by genius' star,  
Is drifting havenless ; the deathless prize  
As distant now as ever. Let it pass—  
For, though the laurel will not grace my grave,  
This “ frail memorial” will haply keep  
My memory green in many a heart that loved me,  
And, it may be, in thine—when he whose hand  
Hath idly traced the perishable page,  
Is crumbling ashes, and his fame—a dream.

H.

# CONSTANCE.

BY CAMILLA TOULMIN.

"By all the token flowers that tell  
 What words can never speak so well ;"  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 "Suspicion is a heavy armour, and  
 With its own weight impedes more than protects."

BRON.

It was a delightful morning in June ; one of those few exquisite days in an English summer, which make us forget or forgive the cold, damp, and fog of our dear native land. Though not too sultry for out-of-door enjoyment, there was not a speck on the clear sky, save those high fantastic white clouds, which relieved the intensity of the blue ether. It would have been impossible to have had a more propitious day for the R—— races ; and contented and happy did the good people seem for miles round. Vehicles of every description were in requisition, from the easy carriage, and magnificent horses of the aristocrat, to the jolting donkey-cart of the mechanic ; and even the comparatively small number, who did not join the living stream,

lingered on the way-side, or at the doors of their cottages, to catch a glimpse of the gentry as they passed on.

By the way, that order generally called "lower" are often excellent judges of beauty and real elegance. Their admiration is so sincere and heartfelt, and is frequently expressed with such originality, that many a beau might gain an "idea" for some new set compliments from the cottager. All this is apropos of Constance Tracey, for many were the broken exclamations her approach drew forth, and many the blessings that were showered upon her. She was known to a large portion of the poor in the neighbourhood, and to be known and loved were one and the same thing.

In the carriage with her were an old lady and gentleman, Mr. Devereux and his maiden sister; and by its side rode their nephew, the handsome Captain Norman Devereux. He had joined them but a few minutes, and one hand rested on the side of the open carriage, while the other with some difficulty kept his spirited horse at a moderate pace. He had just presented Constance with a bouquet of rare flowers; but there seemed, to the casual observer, no need that so simple a gift should have called a deep blush into her cheek; and one might almost fancy there was a deeper tinge on the face, and a brighter sparkling in the eyes of the gentleman than usual. In truth, reader, every delicate blossom whispered some separate message of love to the heart of Constance, for Norman had recently taught her the "language of flowers." How

beautiful and loveable they are, and how fitting to be the emblems of affection ! The most poetical nation of the eastern world first adopted them as such. And a poetry they all have ; from the gayest and gaudiest to the trembling bells of the humble lily of the valley ; a poet might dream a story for all and each of them.

No matter what they were which composed the mystical bouquet of Constance ; though to enumerate them would be to teach lovers a prettier method of making a declaration than on satin paper. Instead of being confined with a ribbon, their stems were passed through a turquoise ring ; but the fable belonging to this stone can be no secret ; every body knows that in the days of superstition it was said to test the giver's truth in absence, and to lose its pure blue when it became inconstant.

Mr. Devereux was a gentleman by birth and education, and a wealthy merchant of that city whose "merchants are princes." And who was Constance Tracey his adopted daughter ? No relative but the youngest, and only surviving child of one who in early life had deserted and deceived him. He had loved her mother with all the deep devotion of a true and manly heart, and strangely constant had that worship proved, which was first poured forth by the wealthy lover of five-and-thirty, to the portionless beauty of seventeen. Her vanity was gratified by the notice of one, who for years had been considered the most fastidious of his sex ; and with a heart at least free, and dazzled by prospects of splendour, which she never had a right to anticipate,



it may be Marian Woodley mistook her own feelings when she accepted the offer of Arthur Devereux. Alas! she should have loved him: for it is a fearful thing to trifle with another's affections as she did. Unfortunately, soon after her engagement she met Walter Tracey, a handsome youth of one-and-twenty. It was during a temporary absence of Mr. Devereux, whom business had called from England, and the mother of Marian guessed not the danger to which her daughter was exposed. Clever, but unprincipled, Tracey was one who made a boast of the hearts he had gained,—it may be doubted if he had himself any heart to give, and assuredly when he first, as the amusement of an idle hour, endeavoured to attract Marian, he had no idea of entailing on himself the encumbrance he would have considered a wife to be. Perhaps, however, he had at last compassion for the being whose happiness he had blasted; perhaps he thought it would be a proud thing for the world to see that he was preferred to the wealthy and noble-minded Devereux. In short, soon after the return of her betrothed, Marian eloped with Tracey, leaving an incoherent letter addressed to her widowed mother, entreating her forgiveness for the deception she had practised, and evidently written under the passionate excitement of contending feelings.

Heart-broken as Devereux was, after a while, from the ashes of his love sprang an intense interest and compassion for the young creature he had so idolized. At least her error was not that most degrading one of forsaking the poor lover for the rich one. No; he could

still respect her, while he trembled for her fate, linked now for ever to the worthless Tracey.

Years rolled on with their strange chronicles of chequered weal and woe, but to Marian they brought little but misery. Tracey had not been bred to any profession, and when the small fortune he inherited was exhausted, he found it difficult to replenish his empty coffers ; disappointment soured his temper, and his ill humour was vented in reproaches on his wife. Meek, gentle, uncomplaining, she bore with all. Then came indifference, an indifference to be felt if not avowed, though little pains he took to disguise that she was in his way, a stumbling block, an incumbrance, which hindered his advancement in the world ; but still,—still she loved on, and sought by every art to raise once more the dormant spark of affection. By degrees they sank into indigence, actual poverty ; and the handsome, accomplished Tracey became a brutalized drunkard and gamester !

It was then that from an unknown friend Marian received repeatedly sums of money. All efforts to trace the donor were unavailing, but for years the punctual remittances of the anonymous correspondent saved the neglected wife and children from absolute want. At length her husband died, and from the hand of an associate, one whom he had dignified with the title of friend. A hasty quarrel in a fit of intemperance, a challenge given on the instant, and in twelve hours a livid corpse was all that remained of the turbulent Walter Tracey !

Mr. Devereux was horror-stricken at the catastrophe.

Possessing, himself, a calm, well regulated mind, the guilt of the act appeared awful, especially as since his own disappointment, he had turned more even than before to that only balm for the troubled spirit, religion. But Marian was free: what strange feelings did this thought awaken in the breast of Devereux! Memory brought forth her mournful record, but fancy was there to paint in glowing colours a chart for the future.

Alas! when they met again, Marian was on her death-bed. Sorrow, neglect, the bitter portion of unrequited affection, had done their work, and Devereux could scarcely recognize in the emaciated figure, the hollow cheek, and sunken eye, shaded by hair prematurely grey, that being whom last he saw in the lavish bloom and beauty, which youth and health bestow. After a while he acknowledged himself her stranger friend, and solemnly promised to provide for her only remaining child, the little Constance, at that time about two years old. Thus were Marian's last hours consoled!

It was a pleasant thing to mark the change which came over the grave methodical bachelor, and his household. His maiden sister, then a middle-aged woman, had long resided with him, and henceforth their home was to be the home of little Constance.

From the care of a nurse, Constance was transferred to that of a governess; and in due time the infant's toys, which, it must be confessed, had been suffered to litter the drawing-room, gave place to the large doll

and the juvenile books. In a very few years might be seen the fair girl, with one touch more of thought in her soft eyes than belonged to her age ; an expression won from her constant intercourse with those so much older than herself. Then might she be seen bending over her painting or embroidery, or practising the brilliant fantasia. A few more spring times and harvests, and she had grown into the graceful, refined woman, whose presence and influence are felt like sunshine in a house.

It was at this time Norman became very intimate at his uncle's dwelling. It was the first desire of Mr. Devereux's heart to see him united to Constance, but he was wise enough to keep secret his wishes on the subject, and suffer matters to take their own course. He had determined to have the large fortune he had amassed, equally divided between his nephew and his adopted child ; still it is not surprising that he should be well pleased at the thought that it would be ultimately united. Both were intelligent, handsome, and accomplished, and suited to each other with regard to age and character : the result may be anticipated. At the time they are introduced to the reader, they loved fondly and truly, though, as yet, Norman's trembling lips had refused to make the formal avowal. Deep, true love is humble and fearful, not bold and confident. More than once, as they walked together on the race-ground at R——, were the words half uttered which should confirm the declaration, which the flowers had already translated to the heart of Constance ; but no,

not in that gay crowd would he ask the avowal he hoped to win from her.

There was to be a race-ball in the evening, and though, when they separated, there might be a lingering pressure of the hand, while something was whispered about the "first quadrille," their parting was hurried and careless, as with the nearest and dearest, it ever is, when we think so soon to behold them again. Alas! for the fallacy of human hope and expectation.

\* \* \* \* \*

A few hours only had passed. Brilliant was the lighted ball-room, and music had lent her enchantment to the scene. Young hearts were beating high with hope, and fair forms were flitting by, but that of Constance was not among them. Leaning against a pillar, a little apart from the dancers, stood Norman listlessly chatting with a brother officer, and watching every fresh arrival, with something more than the idle curiosity of his friend. Presently an acquaintance came up and whispered with a malicious smile, that Miss Tracey would not be there that evening; Miss Devereux having sprained her ankle in getting into the carriage. Constance had refused to leave her, and even had she been disposed so to do, she could not have appeared without a chaperon.

Norman's first impulse was to ride over to Mr. Devereux's house (seven miles, by the way) but the dread of being quizzed restrained him: it is so disagreeable to have a jest made of our best and deepest feelings. Then he balanced in his own mind, whether

he should chat away the evening with his male friends, or make himself as agreeable as it was possible for a disappointed lover to do, to some three or four plain and neglected girls, who were grouped in one corner of the room. He had just arrived at the latter and more amiable determination, when his eye met the recognizing glance of a handsome and splendidly attired woman, who had just entered the room.

Lady Jane Melton was the wife of the colonel of Norman's regiment, and a daughter of the Earl of L——. About four or five years since, he had been on visiting terms at her father's house. A younger brother of Lady Jane's, now dead, had been his intimate acquaintance; and he who was once even dearer to her than a brother, had been his college companion, and was still his bosom friend. They had frequently passed weeks together at Lord L——'s mansion in S—shire, and Norman had been the confidant of Frederic Vargrave's ambitious and unwise attachment. For; alas! he was neither rich nor noble. There is a bright and golden dream of hope, which promises to the young mind, especially to the mind overflowing with genius and imagination, that by its own exertions shall be over-leaped the barriers which birth or fortune may have interposed. Such a dream was Frederic's; and the star which guided his course was Lady Jane, the goal to which he looked, her hand. That she had in some degree returned his attachment, Norman was aware; for he knew that letters and protestations had passed between them. Probably she

had loved as well as a girl possessing some good qualities, but still with a heart overgrown by the weeds of vanity and selfishness, could love.

Years rolled on, and Vargrave remained as yet undistinguished, except in a limited circle. The heart of the vain and selfish woman of six-and-twenty, assumed a different character, and a cold worldliness had by that time entirely choked up what few flowers of romance and constancy had bloomed in her girlhood. She began to congratulate herself that her attachment was still a secret, and when Colonel Melton, the heir presumptive to a wealthy earldom proposed for her, there was but little persuasion needed.

Lady Jane had now been married about a twelve-month, but Norman had not seen her for years; and Colonel Melton was almost a stranger to him, having exchanged into his regiment only very recently. Lady Jane and Norman, however, were soon in animated conversation; they danced together also several times, though Lady Jane, on pretence of the heat of the room, or fatigue, refused two or three of her husband's friends, who requested the honour of her hand.

But as the hours wore on, a narrow observer might have detected that their conversation, whatever its subject, became far more interesting; and though Lady Jane appeared less gay and animated, there was an earnestness about her which she before had wanted; Norman's manner also seemed changed. As Lady Jane leaned upon his arm, her head scarcely reaching his shoulder, he stooped to catch her words, uttered in

a soft low tone ; and there was an evident air of attention—almost of tenderness, which belongs sometimes to pity, as well as that which is said to be akin to it. Once, as they passed very near Colonel Melton, Norman uttered distinctly “Dear Lady Jane.” They moved on, and the remainder of the sentence was lost ; but as he handed her across the corridor to her carriage, unconscious that her husband was by her side, or unprepared for the different sound her voice produced beneath lofty arches, most distinctly Lady Jane was heard to say, “Yes, I have your address,—then, at two o’clock to-morrow I shall be quite my own mistress.” It was well for her peace of mind that it was at least as dark as a June night can be, or she would have been startled by the expression her husband’s countenance must have worn, as they rode home. With excited feelings, and but little inclined to speak, she was still surprised at the abruptness with which he answered the very few questions she put to him. Many there are who will deem that there was slight cause for suspicion or anger, but let such remember that he who is always right has said, that

“Trifles, light as air,  
Are to the jealous confirmations strong  
As proofs of holy writ.”

Foolish, foolish Colonel Melton !

\* \* \* \* \*

“So, sir, you persist in refusing to open that packet in my presence.”

“I am sorry, Colonel Melton, that I must decline doing so.”



"Captain Devereux, I will tell you what it contains. I overheard your appointment with Lady Jane : I have called at this hour, that *I* also might be here to receive her. She has just driven to your door in a hired carriage, unattended, and I suppose must have taken the precaution of enquiring if you were disengaged, or she would have alighted. Unsuspicious of the visitor you have, she then sends up this packet; what——" and for a moment, while Colonel Melton spoke, the angry passion depicted in his features gave place to a sneer, "what a blundering servant yours must be to bring it in while I am here. Devereux," he continued, in a louder tone, "I know it by the octagonal shape and size—that is my wife's miniature in your hand."

"It is not, Colonel Melton."

"I cannot—I do not believe you."

The red spot burnt for a moment on Devereux's cheek ere he replied, "Were you not my commanding-officer, you should answer for this; as it is, I throw back the lie in your teeth,—do with it what you will."

"Then I will waive the distinction of rank, and if you be not coward as well as liar,—sir, you shall hear from me—good morning."

When the first glow of passion had a little subsided, Norman remained for some time musing, and if his thoughts had been coined into words, they would have been somewhat to the following effect: "So I am in a pretty dilemma—I shall be challenged of course; it is mighty pleasant, certainly, to be made a target of, especially for helping other persons out of their trouble;

I run a pretty good chance of being disinherited the bargain ; for my uncle warned me, when I entered the army, to keep clear of quarrels, and above all, of duelling ; and seriously declared he would not leave any to me if I ever engaged in any thing of the kind. I wonder whether he will keep his word. I will not fire in the air ; that would look as if there were cause for the colonel's anger ; but I will purposely wound him. I suppose one fire will satisfy his wrath ; even then I cannot give an explanation without promising Lady Jane. Poor thing ! what a passionate brute of a husband she has ; yet it serves her right, for behaving so ill to Vargrave." After a while, he drew towards him the packet which had been mentioned, and without opening, after having written a short note, re-inclosed, sealed, and directed it. He then rang for his servant, " Thomas," said he, " I charge you to deliver this parcel for me ; you can go on your way back. About four miles on the London road, you will come to a little inn, called the Rose and Crown. Stop for a Mr. Jenkins, from London, and give this into his own hands."

\* \* \* \* \*

A week passed away. It was a delicious summer evening, and Constance stood, seemingly gazing on the beautiful prospect which presented itself from the drawing-room window, while in truth she had retired thither to conceal her emotion, for her lip quivered, and her eyes were blinded with tears. But she was not unnoticed by Mr. Devereux ; he approached,

and, taking her hand, tried in a gentle and kind voice to console her. "Constance, he is not worthy of these tears; you would be wise to school yourself to forget him."

"But, dear, dear Mr. Devereux," exclaimed Constance, "do not believe this evil report of Norman; revoke what you have just said;" and as she spoke she laid her hand on his arm, and looked up beseechingly in his face,—“for my sake, forgive him.”

"Constance, I have forgiven him. It is not for one frail and erring mortal to refuse to another that pardon of which he must himself stand so much in need, but I still claim the right of disposing as I please of the wealth I myself have acquired. Wealth, like every other blessing, may be made an instrument of evil as well as of good, and in his hands, my reason tells me, it would but add strength to the tempter's power. Still my brother's child shall never want, and I will provide that he shall receive an annuity when I die equal to the allowance I now make him, and in my letter of to-day, I promised to arrange for him the exchange he is anxious to make into another regiment. Had it occurred in a moment of anger, under other circumstances, I might have overlooked it; but the cause of the quarrel it is, which proves that he is devoid of principle."

"But you have only common report," rejoined Constance.

"Which he takes not the trouble to contradict," was the reply of Mr. Devereux, who continued:—

"Every one agrees that his attentions to Lady Jane at the ball were most pointed; we know that they are old acquaintances, and it seems to be generally suspected that Lady Jane had an attachment in early life, and married Colonel Melton out of pique during a lover's quarrel. I assure you the current rumour is, that Norman is the person, and that, had not Colonel Melton discovered the whole plot, they would actually have eloped the day after the races."

(Surely there never was a web of falsehood, perfectly mischievous, that had [not woven in its dark meshes one thread of truth, as if to give strength and durability to the whole fabric.)

"But Lady Jane is reconciled to her husband," said Constance.

"Yes, but not till she had heard of the duel. Then, though, thank Heaven! no blood was shed, she rushed half frantic into her husband's room, and after having been closeted with him for an hour, returned, it is true, with a pale face and streaming eyes, yet clearly with the quarrel quite made up. However, an artful and beautiful woman can persuade a man to any thing."

"I am going up to London," pursued Mr. Devereux, "and while there I shall make a new will. But, my sweet Constance, dry these tears; let me see again a happy face."

"Do not, pray do not alter your will; or if you do change it, leave your wealth to some noble charity; but never, never disinherit Norman to make me rich; it would be like the legacy of a curse."

She clung to him with passionate entreaty ; but his only answer was an affectionate embrace, as he kissed her pale cheek still moistened with tears.

At that very hour, Norman Devereux sat musing in his solitary lodging. " Lady Jane should have released me from my promise of secrecy," murmured he ; " my uncle ought to know the truth, although he does not deign to question me ; and yet, what matter ? since Constance, it seems, does not believe my assertion. Why does she not answer my letter ? I told her, when released from a promise, I would relate to her every particular, and she ought to believe it. Yet, vain credulous fool that I am, what right have I to suppose she cares for me ? I am too proud to address her again—the disowned and disinherited shall not sue to the heiress."

\* \* \* \* \*

It is the privilege of the tale-teller to conduct his readers rapidly, as by a magician's wand, from place to place—from one scene to another. To call them perhaps in the same page from the palace to the prison,—from a lady's boudoir to the field of battle. A bridge also may be thrown across the gulf of time, and the writer needs not to register all the joy and the sorrow which may have been borne away on its rapid stream. Even thus is Constance Tracey again introduced to the reader more than two years after the occurrences which have been narrated. During that time death had been busy ; Miss Devereux was no more, and now Constance was watching beside the death-bed of her guardian,

the protector of her infancy, the guide of her youth, the friend of her womanhood. Mr. Devereux knew that his race was nearly run, and did not attempt to conceal the truth from himself, or from others. He spoke freely to Constance of his approaching end, and tried to soothe her regret ; but amid all her heartfelt sorrow, there was something yet to be done, the hopes of accomplishing which she had cherished for the last two years. This was to cancel the will he had made in her favour.

It was late in the autumn. Constance had retired to a room adjoining the sick chamber, to take the rest which a sofa afforded ; but the gray dawn of morning was only just breaking through the half-closed shutters, when the nurse hastily awoke her. The invalid was much worse, and Constance felt her heart sink within her, when she marked the glazed eye and pallid cheek. It was but a few months since she had watched for the last breath, and closed the dying eyes of another whom she dearly loved ; and she knew too well the shadow which death flings, for a brief space, over the human countenance ere he claims his prey, to doubt that the hour of her second trial was come. And to that trial she nerved herself by the strength of a mind accustomed to self-control. They who have passed through such a one can alone picture the scene, for the emotions the presence of death calls forth must be felt before they can be understood. Even now she did not abandon a hope to which she so long had clung ; and tears which might have relieved the anguish of her

mind, but have destroyed her self-possession, by a violent effort she drove back from their sparkling throne, perchance to scald at the heart's core.

Constance, with one hand clasped in hers, knelt by the bed-side of the dying man ; but after a while she rose from prayer, and uttered in a low tone words which were evidently those of entreaty.

“ I do forgive him,” was feebly murmured in reply.

Again his hand was clasped, and again Constance whispered persuasive words in his ear. For a moment he seemed wandering and bewildered, and then spoke in a clearer voice than before. She eagerly listened, and hastened to obey his orders. Selecting a small key from a bunch which lay near, she entered an adjoining dressing-room, and opened the drawer of a writing-table, to which she had been directed. She soon found the object of her search, and returned with the document, the will of Mr. Devereux. Constance pointed towards the fire : the old man made a movement of assent ; and in less than a minute, smoke was wreathing round the crackling parchment. Scarcely was it consumed, when Mr. Devereux, by a violent effort, half raised himself, but suddenly sank back ; he tried to speak ; his words came thick and unintelligible. He motioned for pen and paper, but though his fingers moved, the lines they traced were indistinct ; only here and there could a word be deciphered, “ Will — Constance—divided.”

A physician, for whom they had hastily sent, now arrived ; but human aid was unavailing. Again Con-

Constance clasped the thin hand which now was moistened with her tears. Alas! her watch was soon ended. Her ear caught the last tone of a voice which had never spoken to her in other than affection's language; and she met the fixed and parting gaze of eyes, that, for nearly twenty years, had watched over her with unvarying kindness.

And where was Captain Devereux all this time? Norman had been abroad for nearly two years, and returning with his regiment, heard accidentally in London of his uncle's illness. He hastened to Devereux Park, but arrived too late to see him alive. He was, however, surprised to find himself received as the undisputed heir. That there had been a will, was well known; therefore it was necessary to account for its disappearance; Constance simply stated it had been destroyed by Mr. Devereux's order during his illness; but the nurse, an old servant of the family, who had attended him, led Norman to the side of all that remained of his uncle, and there described to him the scene of the morning.

It must be remembered that whatever feelings of regard had once subsisted between Norman and Constance, time had greatly changed all outward demonstrations of them, and whether or not affection, like a fire damped but not extinguished, still smouldered in the heart of either, there was no sign to determine. Time, and Mr. Devereux's arguments, had shaken the belief which Constance would so willingly have cherished, that in the affair of the duel Norman was not unfaithful



to her, while he from receiving no answer to a letter addressed to her at the time, believed that she was indifferent to him. But now she appeared in a new light, for he could scarcely think that a sense of rigid justice alone could have induced her so ardently to desire the destruction of a document which would have left her the heiress of a princely fortune. "Upon this hint he spake" some few weeks afterwards; but Constance, to his dismay, declined the offer of his hand. She was too proud to give other reason, than that he had mistaken her feelings if he believed them to be warmer than friendship.

Miss Devereux had bequeathed to Constance a portion of her fortune, more indeed as a remembrance of affection, than with the idea that it would ever prove of importance to her; but grateful did Constance feel on learning that the income she would derive from it, though slender, would yet render her in some measure independent. Meanwhile, with plans undecided for the future, she had made her temporary residence at the house of a lady from whom she had received many civilities, within a mile of Devereux Park. One morning Mr. and Mrs. Vargrave were announced as visitors to Miss Tracey. Constance had seen Mr. Vargrave but a few times, some years since, and his wife was a stranger to her. He, however, introduced her as one who sought the acquaintance and friendship of Miss Tracey. Conversation took a general turn, and Captain Devereux's name was often mentioned. The subject of his late absence from England led imperceptibly to the

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circumstances under which he left. "Believe me," said Vargrave, "it caused me real misery, when I heard that he had offended his uncle by an act, of which unknowingly I was the occasion."

"You!" said Constance, in astonishment.

"Surely you are aware of the circumstance which led Colonel Melton to challenge our friend?"

"I know nothing but common report."

"May I ask what that is?"

Constance blushed deeply as she answered. "Much, that I would give worlds to disbelieve!"

Vargrave paused for a moment ere he replied, "Norman may have been bound by a promise, but I am not, and I think it a duty I owe him to tell you the whole truth, and to my wife," continued he, turning to her with a smile, "it will be but a twice-told tale. I was very young when I first knew Lady Jane C——, and, flattered by the notice of one so far above me in station, I by degrees gave myself up to an intoxicating dream. My imagination invested her with all the attributes with which it was wont to paint perfection. I worshipped for years an idol of my own erection, while I believed it to be a noble-minded and true-hearted woman. Perhaps, Miss Tracey, you have never experienced those deep feelings which give us so much insight into the mysteries of the human heart; and yet suffering of all kinds teaches us that lesson; however, it would be difficult to imagine my state of mind, when I heard that Lady Jane was about to become the bride of Colonel Melton. After her marriage, it occurred to me

as strange, that she had never proposed an exchange of the numerous letters which had passed between us, or of the miniature we each possessed of the other. However, for a while, I did not regret it, for I still loved to gaze on the beautiful likeness I retained. But in a few months a change took place in my feelings. I loved again—I loved another. There is an old proverb, that many a heart is caught in the rebound; and trust me, it is a true one. In the haven of peace and affection I then found, I seemed like a mariner who, after being tempest tost and at last wrecked, is landed at home when he least hopes for, or expects it. But now it was my wish to have the letters and miniatures exchanged, and for this purpose I found an opportunity of sending those I retained to Lady Jane, requesting her to forward those in her possession, on a certain day, to a little inn by the road-side, where I would be under a fictitious name to receive them. Unfortunately she met Norman Devereux at the race-ball the preceding evening, and knowing that he was in my confidence, preferred asking him to deliver the packet, instead of entrusting it to her own servant. I believe the excuse she made for troubling him, was that her husband was of a very jealous temper, and that her simplest actions were often misconstrued.

It appeared that Colonel Melton must have overheard a part of their conversation, though only enough to mislead him, and, calling on Devereux the next day, the packet arrived while he was there. Unluckily the miniature was of a peculiar shape, and the same as

that of Lady Jane, which I had returned a few days before, and which he, unknown to her, had accidentally seen. This confirmed the suspicion he thought proper to entertain; and as she had concealed from him her having been previously engaged to me, she now dreaded his discovering her deception, and Norman could therefore give no explanation without compromising her. His refusal to do so led to high words; the challenge was given.—Miss Tracey, you know the rest. But Norman told me that he wrote to you, assuring you he would one day give you every particular.”

“No—no, never,” said Constance, in a voice trembling from hopes and feelings which were awakened in her heart.

“Is it possible you have never received it?—Though circumstances have separated us, and I have seen him but seldom, I have more than once heard him regret that you deigned not to answer that letter.”

Constance understood but little of the conversation which followed; and when her visitors were gone, a bewildering mass of images crowded on her mind. With a flushed cheek, and hasty steps, she paced the chamber, and then suddenly burst into a flood of violent child-like tears. She sank into a chair and buried her face in her hands. She was roused after a little while by a gentle touch, and raising her head, beheld her servant pale as ashes kneeling at her feet!

The conscience-stricken girl had from the next room overheard the conversation, and now came to pour out

her regrets and repentance for her fault. It appeared that the letter had actually been delivered into her hands for her young mistress, but at the moment she was with her lover, since proved to be a young man, who between coaxing and teasing persuaded her to give it to him, "just to try and see how fine ladies and gentlemen write letters;" but according to her account this was attempted without "soiling and creasing the white paper, and then really, as if of its own accord the seal gave way,"—and as the letter when perceived to their judgments of little importance, at last consented that it should be destroyed. "My fault he led me into, I know," continued the girl, "and I thank God we were parted, though it nearly broke my heart at the time. I have been an altered person since then—but I know, I feel that Tracey, that you can never forgive me."

Yet there was something in the expression of the girl's countenance which contradicted her words, so that no one could look in the sweet face of Constance Tracey, and deem that anger could dwell in her, or revenge find there, even a momentary place.

"Poor girl!" said she, after a pause, "you have had your punishment enough. You have been deceived by the man you trusted; nay, do not weep—I do forgive you, I have forgiven you. But leave me now."

"And mine," murmured Constance, when she was left herself alone,—“mine has been the worst sort

ess.—I have suspected where confidence was  
,

t surprises—misfortunes—all the startling events  
e, rarely come singly, and the discovery of the  
ing was not destined to be the only one the day  
d produce. An hour or two afterwards a carriage  
up, and from it alighted Captain Devereux. He  
sted an interview with Miss Tracey, and was  
ed into the drawing-room. Poor Constance!  
ondemnation had broken down her barrier of pride,  
er voice faltered as she replied to his hurried greet-  
Briefly did Norman relate the purport of his visit.  
ing various papers, he had that morning discovered a  
bearing the date of two years back, signed by his  
, and bequeathing his property (with the exception  
ven hundred pounds per annum to Norman) to  
dopted child Constance Tracey. This was the  
cal document he had intended to destroy; and it  
ow easy to understand, from the broken sentences  
dying man, that he remembered another will was  
istence, by which he had left his fortune equally  
ed between Norman and Constance. In the wan-  
g of his mind, which, in his last moments, flickered  
he light of a taper about to expire, he had mistaken  
ne for the other, and given directions by which  
was consumed which he desired to be preserved.  
e impulse of the moment, Norman had brought it  
r, and while he voluntarily resigned possessions  
rich she now might establish a legal claim, he  
more *expressed* the admiration he felt at the noble

intentions which had thus been accidentally frustrated. Her answer was a strange one.

“Norman, you do not ask after any of your old friends: I—I have seen a very dear friend of yours to-day.”

“Indeed!”

The heavy shade of a cloudy afternoon was momentarily increasing, and hid the deep blushes of Constance, as she continued, “Yes, I have seen Frederic Vargrave to-day; he has been on this circuit, and called to introduce his wife to me.”

“I should have been pleased to see him,” said Devereux, “though his name ever brings to my mind some painful circumstances in my life, with which he was intimately connected.”

“Norman,” said Constance, in a low voice, and she laid her hand gently on his arm as she spoke, “Norman, he told me a long story about you.”

“About me!” exclaimed Devereux, with some emotion, but he retained in his own the small fair hand, on a finger of which still rested, unfaded, unchanged, the *turquoise ring*.

With a sort of desperate courage, and speaking rapidly, Constance continued, “He told me much about the duel; and that you wrote to me,—but I never received your letter. Oh! you must have despised me.”

He drew her towards him, as he replied, “Speak, Constance—one word; confirm the hope you have this moment raised, or in pity crush it at once.” And her

head sank on his shoulder, as she murmured "Yours—yours for ever!"

How rapidly the time passed! It was late in the year, and soon grew dusk. All was gloomy without—all bright and cheering within; forming no unfitting type of the change the reconciliation had effected in the hearts of Norman and Constance, who still sat by the light only of a blazing fire. Long explanations had passed, and perhaps a few tears had been shed; but the countenances of both beamed with that quiet joy which has so much more of happiness than mere mirth can ever know. Norman was making some promises and protestations. "Well, you shall make me one vow," said Constance, smiling, "and question me not on its strangeness; promise me, for three minutes, not to interfere with my actions; promise me, on your honour, as you love me, so you will obey."

"I promise."

He had scarcely spoken, when Constance took up the will, which had laid on a table unnoticed for the last hour, and hastily opening it, placed it on the bright blazing fire. Involuntarily, Norman started up, forgetful of a promise he had fancied a mere jest; but Constance seized his hands, and almost sank on her knees, as she exclaimed, "It was the last wish of him who loved us both so well."



## TO \* \* \*

## I.

THAT slow and heavy bell hath knolled,  
 Like thunder o'er a shoreless sea ;  
 I have not heard it, since it told  
 The hour that bore me back to thee :  
 The hour whose wings had lulled me long,  
 When hope was cold, and grief was strong ;  
 Whose kindness ever came, to keep  
 The shade of sorrow from my sleep,  
 And mocked my dreams, but, wild and far,  
 Departed with the Morning star,—  
 Yet came at last. That lonely bell  
 Had waked me with its measured knell ;  
 And though my soul, in its awaking  
 From dreams of thee, is always chill,  
 I knew that hour, their brightness breaking,  
 Had scattered only to fulfil.  
 And, through my trembling spirit sent,  
 The billowy echoes quivering went,  
 As the swift throb of morning breaks  
 Through the thin rain-cloud's folded flakes ;

Even as, that hour, it beamed above  
The azure of the expanded plains,  
And filled the heaven with light, like love,  
And kindled through its azure veins,  
As the keen joy through mine:  
I knew, that ere those purple stains  
Of heaven should see the sun's decline,  
And melt along the western sea,  
A brighter sun should rise for me.

## II.

And it hath risen,—and it hath set,  
The glory and the tone  
Of twilight have scarce passed, and yet  
I have been long alone.  
It is for those who can forget,  
So that the path of time they tread  
Is strewn with pangs and passions dead,  
To trace their periods of weak pain  
By the cold shadows, that reveal not  
What once they felt—what now they feel not.  
To those, with whom the linked chain  
Of days and years can never press  
Upon their unforgetfulness,  
An hour may be as long,  
When its keen thoughts are dark and swift,  
And when its pangs are strong  
As the onward, undistinguished drift  
Of the calm years, that still retain  
*One hope, one passion, and one pain.*

## III.

That sun hath risen — that sun hath set,  
And though the dim night is not yet  
So lifeless or so dark, for me,  
As it hath been — as it shall be,  
There's that of dew and chillness thrown  
Across my thoughts and brow,  
Whose inward meaning none have known,  
Not even thou—  
Thou — for whose sake that brow is dark,  
Whose constant pang thou canst not mark.  
Alas ! if pity be a pain,  
I would not wish thee once to see  
How much the distant feel for thee,  
And feel in vain.

## IV.

It strikes again, that measured chime ;  
Hark ! its cold vibrations climb  
Heavily up the slope of night ;  
And lo ! how quiverings of keen light  
Along the starlit waters follow  
Those undulations hoarse and hollow,  
That move among the tufted trees  
That crown yon eastern hill,  
Which midnight frees from bird and breeze,  
Bidding their leaves lie still.

There—deeply, softly, charmed and checked,  
They pass the pile with slower swelling,  
Where,\* wildly wrung, or early wrecked,  
Pure heart and piercing intellect  
Now keep their unattended dwelling :  
And sorrow's sob, and phrenzy's shriek  
Are calm beneath their cadence weak,  
And torture tamed, and grief beguiled,  
Have turned, have listened, and have smiled.

## V.

My own quick thoughts, which were as wild,  
Have sunk at once, I know not why, —  
Not less sad, but far more mild,  
As these low sounds float by ;  
Low sounds, that seem the passing bell,  
For the swift and dark eyed hours, whose rushing  
Around the earth was fraught with flushing,  
Kindled by the entrancing spell  
That breathed of thee,  
When from thy lips and from thy presence fell  
The stream of light, of melody  
That on their wings did glow and dwell,  
Till each was faint with his own ecstasy.  
And they are dead,—cold and dead ;  
Yet in the light of their own beauty lying,  
That light, which is alone undimmed, undying,  
When for all else the shroud is spread,

\* A mad-house in a clump of trees.

Imperishable, though so pale,  
It burns beneath the moveless veil,  
That o'er their beauty and their breath,  
Hath cast a guise and charm of death ;  
A guise how false !—a charm how vain !  
For each of the departing train  
Drank, as it passed, beholding Thee,  
First joy — then Immortality.

## INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM.

BY J. A. ST. JOHN.

At the residence of Lord Burghersh at Florence, ambassador to the court of the Grand Duke, his lordship's children, many of them born in Italy, were early exposed to the moral as well as the physical influences of the scene. Surrounded continually by them, nursed by Italian nurses, impressed from morning to night by nothing but Italian notions, Italian customs, Italian feelings of every kind, the minds of the children gradually acquired most of the qualities which characterize the natives of the south. They became in fact, almost Florentines, so that their notions, ideas and belief, which operate upon the natives, their sympathies and associations also, and enabled them to enter into, and experience delight in, the legendary world of superstition which there exists before the imagination.

For Louisa Burghersh, at the period to which I now wish to refer, was fifteen years old, her brother about twelve. Strongly attached to each other, they were much together; and, in the gardens of the family palace, which formed their father's residence, they loved to appear in a half-antique costume,

sometimes with the implements of a vine-dresser in his hand, at others like an attendant on Flora, with a basket of flowers upon his head, while his long clustering ringlets, the admiration of all who beheld him, hung waving over his shoulders. One morning in spring, the gardens being in their prime, the trees clothed with luxuriant foliage, and the plants and shrubs with flowers, Louisa rose early, and strolled forth into the garden; not merely to breathe the freshness of the morning air, but to recall and enjoy over again in fancy a very singular narrative, which from a young Italian countess, she had heard over-night. The scene of the catastrophe was a short stone balustrade, extending from the corner of a summer house embosomed in trees, at the eastern extremity of the terrace. On her way to the spot, whither she proceeded slowly and in a musing mood, she plucked a number of roses, and other odoriferous flowers, and seating herself under the shade of the trees, began to run over in order the events which marked the career of Catarina Zimenes. Though somewhat desirous of indulging in her reverie uninterrupted, the beautiful greyhound crouched at her feet soon gave notice of the approach of an intruder. This was Ernest, who had risen still earlier than his sister, in proof of which he brought along with him a full basket of flowers, culled from all the various parterres of the garden. Observing Louisa to be more thoughtful and meditative than usual, he began, very naturally, to inquire the cause, and, by degrees, learned from her lips the particulars I am about

to relate. While she was arranging in her mind the circumstances and facts of the narrative, Ernest stood before her, leaning on the wall with his flower-basket still upon his head, looking the very personification of patience and good-nature. His eyes were turned another way, that he might not by allowing symptoms of eagerness to escape him, embarrass the *raconteuse*, before she could make up her mind to begin, while the graceful greyhound Leila, leaping against his breast, vainly endeavoured to attract his notice. Louisa's attitude being perfectly unstudied, was equally graceful: her left hand still holding the bouquet, rested on the slab of the balustrade, the right on the hound's neck, while her downcast eyes appeared to gaze on vacancy. Thus beautifully grouped, they were beheld from a neighbouring avenue by their mother, who afterwards, when she who constituted the principal figure had been removed by Providence, painted the picture which continued to dwell upon her memory. And they who behold it even in its diminutive representation here, will confess that, even among those to whom the arts are every thing, few could surpass the natural simplicity of the design, the graceful attitudes of the figures, or the life-like truth and simplicity of the expression. The picture, however, was a labour of love; of that love which of all is deepest, the love of a mother, and such love overcomes and subdues all things to itself. But from this topic I must snatch myself away to proceed to the dream of Catherine Zimenes, which Louisa thus related :



## THE DREAM.

THE Count di Zimenes, a man of vast possessions, and still vaster ambition, for whom yonder palace was originally erected, had one daughter, the heiress of his name and fortune. This daughter, Catherine, seemed at first sight calculated to inspire all men with love, as she undoubtedly did with admiration. With a figure modelled by the Graces, features regular and delicate, luxuriant hair which fell naturally into ringlets, and dark eyes of incomparable brilliancy, she possessed an expression in which, to a casual observer, the most feminine softness and sweetness appeared to predominate ; but they who had the honour to know her better were of opinion, that Catherine's characteristics were pride and firmness. There must besides have been some secret flaw in her disposition, never discovered, and for which probably there exists no name ; for of all those whom her rank, her fortune, and her personal beauty attracted, none seemed to love her ; but after paying court for a short time, retreated hastily, as if from something which smote them with dismay. Of this repelling power, in whatever it consisted, the lady herself was unconscious. Her heart, whenever she was led to examine it, appeared to overflow with tenderness, and, like all other mortals, she experienced the necessity of loving, and being beloved. To herself, therefore, not less than to others, it seemed exceedingly strange that all her wooers should drop one after another away, and attach themselves to ladies of attractions and



THE CHILDREN OF LADY BUCKINGHAM.

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fortune far inferior. In truth, she might, in mind not less than in person, be said to have had few equals; her imagination fervid and powerful, ascended ever, and familiarized itself with the highest subjects of human contemplation. She likewise possessed an understanding worthy to be yoked with an imagination so plastic and vivid; and so elevated, pure, and delicate were her thoughts, that, though agitated by exceedingly strong passions, she could yet, in most cases, overmaster them with ease, and thus preserve an habitual serenity in her soaring and noble mind. Catherine could not be said to be studious, though conversant with solitude, and not unacquainted with books. In fits of seclusion she indulged, from an aversion to mingle with common-place people, whose habits and opinions might have somewhat damped her faith in human nature, and inspired her with humbler and more painful ideas even of herself. When at any time she did venture to go abroad, it was in the hope of meeting with some exalted mind with which her own might hold fit communion, and at length, in the young Count Raimondo Baldini, she appeared to have made the desired discovery.

Raimondo was not a Florentine. It hardly seemed, indeed, that he was of Italian origin; for though born, as he said, in the kingdom of Naples, his hair was light, his eyes blue, and his complexion fair and ruddy like that of a Tramontano. The style in which he lived, united with the fascination of his manners, and the number of his acquirements, easily opened a way for

him into the best society. Many were the hearts that fluttered in his presence, and over which he might have obtained unlimited control; but overlooking every other lady, Raimondo at once carried his homage to the feet of Catherine. Her mien and manner, unlike those of other women, instantaneously enthralled his fancy, and he appeared to live and breathe for her alone. Catherine, on her part, experienced feelings nearly similar. She seemed, for the first time, to have beheld a man capable of inspiring love, and worthy to be the object of it. He filled entirely her thoughts by day, and appeared to her continually by night in dreams. Nor did there present itself any obstacle to their union. Raimondo's rank and prospects were such as to satisfy the ambition even of the Count di Zimenes. Things, therefore, proceeded as though a marriage had been near at hand, and Catherine, in all the world's opinion and her own, stood on the verge of happiness.

While matters were in this position, she dreamed a dream, which in its contexture and lineaments was nearly as follows. It is a belief universally received in Florence, that whenever a member of the Zimenes family is about to depart this life, a pale spectral torch is seen to burn, during three whole nights in succession, upon the pinnacle of the palace. The fact confirmed by testimony, and credited by all is, indeed, become historical; and at the period of which I am speaking the phenomenon was fresh in the memory of the citizens; the apparition of the torch having recently preceded

the death of Catherine's mother. Now the young countess beheld in her dream a vast concourse of people, with snow-white garb and spectral aspect, and they walked down the long cypress avenue of the Boboli garden, conversing in whispers as they went along. She followed a little in the rear of this multitude, and heard very distinctly their voices, and the words they uttered ; but yet, strange to say, could at first elicit no meaning from them. Many were the efforts she made to overtake the spectral procession, and inquire the subject of their discourse ; but the laws which regulate our movements in dreams prevented her feet from advancing more rapidly than those of the phantom, while her tongue seemed chained to the roof of her mouth. From the gardens they issued forth into the streets, and after moving in various directions, marching now down wide streets, now down the narrowest courts and alleys, they emerged in front of the Zimenes palace, and the leader of the procession cried aloud :

“ Who will ascend the roof of yonder edifice, and kindle the death-torch there ? ”

At these words Catherine's heart beat quick, and she listened with breathless anxiety to hear the reply. A voice, which she took to be that of Raimondo, answered :

“ Lo, I will do it.”

The sound pierced her to the soul. She strained forward, raised herself on tiptoe, and strove by all possible means to obtain a sight of the speaker. At this moment the spectral throng divided, and she be-

held Raimondo standing, with the torch in his hand, in front of the palace. A steep and winding staircase appeared to grow up beneath his feet ; he ascended it hastily, and with apparent glee ; but ere he could reach the summit, the treacherous steps broke away from under him, and he fell headlong — she knew not whither ; but, ere he could reach the ground, the torch was kindled on the roof, and, with a shriek of terror, Catherine awoke.

#### THE CHAPEL OF INTERPRETATION.

THERE is a superstition which sprang up in the earliest days of Christianity, and still lingers in the umbrageous recesses of the Apennines, around a little chapel, called the Shrine of the Apocalypse. According to popular belief the building was not raised by mortal hands, and certain it is, that whole generations pass over it without leaving behind them the least traces of decay. No priest officiates there ; nor does it require a material besom to cleanse the floor from dust or falling leaves. The place is kept in order by other ministry than that of man, and is never visited but on very extraordinary occasions, when an individual can be found who will dare to spend there, in company with a single taper, the night of the Crucifixion. A spirit, it is said, then appears and interprets, to man or woman, those visions of the night, or those other intimations of the future, which heaven sometimes vouchsafes to mortals.

To this awful and mysterious shrine, Catherine, after much meditation, determined to repair; and as it happened that Easter was drawing near, her mind was not doomed to be long racked by uncertainty. Being of a resolute spirit, and inaccessible to fear, she, on the proper day, donned the inviolable habit of a pilgrim, and thus disguised, with feet bare and hair dishevelled, departed for the Chapel of Interpretation, lying among the roots of the mountains, somewhere near the sources of the Arno. Catherine, as those who comprehend her character will believe, beheld even external nature with eyes different from those of ordinary individuals. The vulgar and the plodding seek in science and knowledge nothing but a wand to disenchant their imaginations, and reduce the infinite majesty of nature to the level of their capacities. The great mind follows a different process, and, Catherine whose mind was truly great, discovered, in the hues of heaven and the forms of earth, the elements of unspeakable beauty, the idea of which descends upon the soul with a gush and a thrill of delight for which language knows no expression.

The road of the dream-pilgrim lay along the course of the Arno, where, unviolated by commerce, it sports and frolics among its native hills. Every beauty which can distinguish a soft landscape, clothed with the colours of eternal spring, and wrapped in unalterable serenity, was here beheld. Brooks of crystal purity descended with quivering lapse like laughing infants, to sport in the embraces of the mother stream. Hills, soft and verdant as paradise, lifted their swelling



bosoms to meet the enamoured sky ; while groves and woods and copses, of every form and hue, chequered the surface of the vale and uplands, feathering the rocks above, or bending in shadowy arches over the stream below. Such, you know, my love, is Vallambrosa, a place which furnished the holiest and noblest poet of the world with the original type of paradise.

As the pilgrim proceeded, the scene every moment disclosed fresh beauties to her view, more especially when evening came on, and diffused over the pavement of heaven a flood of jasper and carbuncle and amethystine hues, vividly reflected from the mirror of the Arno. Night now coming on, soon converted the landscape into a reflection of her dusky visage ; yet Catherine, fearless as she of Bridgewater, whose forest wanderings fill the pages of the *Comus*, proceeded unremittingly on her way, and was soon greeted and cheered by the rising moon, whose pearly light glittered unceasingly on the crisped stream.

Few persons perhaps remark that the heavens, in the course of twenty-four hours, present us constantly with the sight of two worlds,—the world of day and the world of night, as different from each other as material existence from a dream. To persons of Catherine's temperament, the scene which night discloses is by far the lovelier, when the trees and the hills, the perfect fane and the antique ruin, seem to be transported far from the every-day world, the flood of vulgar life and turbulence having ebbed away from the face of nature, and subdued in sleep, we who are then abroad appear

to behold all objects slumbering in eternal repose, amid the starry depths of the sky.

Notwithstanding the doubts and suspicions which, with the point of an invisible goad, urged her forward, the lovely pilgrim felt the serenity of nature steal balmily into her soul. She felt the presence of God as a harmony audible only to the spirit, and knew that His protection was a shield impenetrable to the shafts of accident. Boldly therefore did she move forward, and threading many a mazy pathway, which the Miltonic trees "high overarched embower," a little before midnight, arrived at the mysterious apocalyptic shrine, standing sheltered in the bosom of a woody recess, and approached through a narrow avenue of pines.

As Catherine traversed the avenue paved by the chequered shadows and patches of moonlight, she felt an indescribable thrill through her whole frame, and the long wax taper, whose flame was scarcely stirred by the air, slightly trembled in her hand. The antique building which she now approached was of circular form, springing from a lofty basement, ascended to on all sides by steps, and terminating in a pyriform cupola, surmounted by a cross. Entering the door which she found open, her ear was smitten by a low sound, like the distant fall of waters, the flapping of light wings, or the rustling of leaves in a summer grove. A golden candlestick, terminating in a pinecone above, stood before a small altar of marble, white as alabaster. The pilgrim at once placed her taper in the candlestick, and kneeling upon an ebony tripod at the

foot of the altar, prayed fervently to that spirit which the Almighty is supposed to have entrusted with the task of unveiling the future to mortals. As she proceeded in her orisons, the chapel became gradually filled with smoke, arising as from a censer, and her senses were soothed by the sweetest odours wafted to and fro by the night-breeze. In such a place and at such an hour the least sensitive of human frames would have been powerfully affected: what then must have been the case with Catherine whose imagination and sensibility exerted an unbounded sway over her whole being? Innumerable conjectures respecting the apparition by which she was to be visited, crowded upon her mind. At times she trembled violently, and then by a vigorous effort of the will, by enthusiastic appeals to Heaven in prayer by all the aid which earthly pride and religious fervour could afford, composed herself again, and experienced for a brief season, something like tranquillity. She knew that whatever form the interpreter might assume he would appear on the altar, looking towards the golden candlestick. She therefore, for a long time continued her orisons in silence and with downcast eyes, even after she appeared to feel that the chapel contained another existence besides her own, and imagined that eyes were bent upon her, whose brightness she dreaded to encounter. Gradually, however, recovering her self-possession, the pilgrim looked upward, and behold! a figure, whiter than snow, clothed in full drapery and with out-spread wings, stood upon the altar, smiling on her with looks of unutterable

beauty. Catherine's courage now forsook her: the dream, to obtain the key to which had led her thither, faded from her mind; she could remember nothing, and in that state almost amounting to lethargy, she might have continued till day, had not the spirit, in mild encouraging tones, inquired:

"What wouldst thou, daughter?"

At these words the vision became again painted on her fancy with supernatural vividness; she related it clearly, circumstantially, and with a calmness unaccountable to herself. Her relation was followed by deep silence, until, looking upward earnestly, she implored the spirit to unveil the mystery shadowed forth by the vision. Her ear at length caught these words:

"Daughter, thy destiny depends on an event yet to happen, which accomplished, the love of Raimondo will depart from thee, and he will seek, voluntarily or involuntarily, to kindle the prophetic torch on thy father's roof; and a torch he will kindle, but whose, whether his own or thine, I may not reveal.

"Catherine, the fountains of life and death are in thine own bosom. There, too, in the deep quarry of thy passions, lie the materials which time will mould and shape into happiness or misery. Thine own life and that of Raimondo Baldini are in *thy* hands, and on *thy* will doth it depend whether thine own affections shall ripen into golden fruit, or burn in a hidden furnace and be smothered with dust and ashes."

At these words, while Catherine was about to raise her eyes towards the speaker, the taper was instan-

taneously extinguished, and, looking disturbedly around, she beheld the moonlight streaming inward at the door, and heard the rich full song of the nightingale among the trees without. The presence of darkness is oppressive ever; so that, her mission ended, the dream-pilgrim quitted gladly the spot, and returned by the way she came.

Her feelings had undergone a great change. Considering the interpretation of her vision, she seemed to perceive, though indistinctly, that some insuperable barrier lay stretched between her and Raimondo Baldini. Her thoughts consequently were sad and heavy, and the sombreness of their complexion was augmented by her physical exhaustion. As soon, however, as the first rays of dawn streamed upward in the east from behind the hills, the new-born light and the breezes which ushered in its birth, communicated to the whole air a buoyancy which extended its vibrations to the very soul of Catherine. Nature looked so beautiful, so blythe and joyous around her, that it was impossible to be wholly sad; and in a temper of mind half sweet, half bitter, she wended back her way to Florence, where for some days she confined herself almost entirely to her chamber.

#### THE DEATH-TORCH.

SHORTLY after the event above related, the Count Zimenes gave at his palace a grand entertainment, of which a masked ball constituted a part. All the principal personages of the city were invited, together with

many foreigners, and, among the rest, Raimondo Baldini. The Count, indeed, already regarded him as his future son-in-law, and being perpetually plunged in the billows of political intrigue, observed nothing of the nascent coldness which had for some time been imperceptibly springing up between that young man and his daughter. Scarcely indeed was it perceived by the parties themselves. But Raimondo, naturally gay and sprightly, abounding with anecdotes, jests, and comic sallies, and somewhat frivolous withal, felt his spirits flag and his self-confidence diminish in the presence of Catherine. Of her love he could not doubt; of her goodness and gentleness still less; but he was painfully conscious that, instead of yielding support to a lovely parasite, which, with its beautiful foliage and flowers might grow up around and adorn his ruder strength, he himself, in relation to Catherine, dwindled into a parasitical plant, leaning upon her firmer and nobler nature for support. In this position there was something humiliating. It greatly wounded his pride, and his gross mortal passion shrunk like the fabled Semele into dust and ashes amid the flames of a celestial love. He now appeared like a man who has undertaken some heroic enterprise, from the pursuance of which he cannot in honour shrink, and yet feels himself unequal to the performance. The longing, however, to be delivered from it was growing up in his mind, and he began involuntarily to calculate chances, and to look towards that inexplicable series of causes and effects which we denominate accident.

On the evening of the banquet the company assembled was numerous and magnificent. The apartments, my love, you every day behold, and therefore I need not describe them. With their spaciousness and grandeur you are familiar, and often, too, have you beheld them filled with all that is youthful and noble in Florence, intermingled with the fairer daughters and manlier sons of the north. And yet, very possibly, you will not be able to form a correct idea of the splendour in costume and ornaments, of the barbaric profusion of jewels and gold, and the stately and majestic, though somewhat stiff manners, with which all that pompous display of opulence was strictly in keeping. The Zimenes family made a point of eating out of nothing but gold, and to render their antique massive plate of this metal still more gorgeous and imposing, it was richly sculptured by the chisel of the ablest artists, and crusted thick with the most brilliant gems. The old count, as he sat at the head of his table directly facing his daughter, looked, however, upon every thing he saw as dross, compared with her matchless form and most dignified bearing. In the midst of a crowd of ladies, all young and lovely, she yet shone forth pre-eminently like a star, so that upon her all eyes were directed, save those of Raimondo Baldini, which, as often as it seemed possible to do so unperceived, were turned in rapture on the face of the Contessa Monaldeschi. These glances did not escape the eye of Catherine, who, at so evident a proof of changed affection on his part, felt a pang of anguish

Poignant as it was unanticipated. Her suspicions being thus roused, she resolved carefully to observe the movements of her lover, more particularly during the ball which was to constitute the principal amusement of the evening.

It had been agreed on between them that they should so mask as to be known to each other. But on entering the ball-room, Catherine's penetrating eye immediately detected her lover in a different disguise, evidently adopted for the purpose of eluding her observation. Immediately comprehending the cause, Catherine herself retired, and re-appeared in a mask and costume calculated effectually to protect her from discovery. Not to be mistaken in the voice of Raimondo, even though she might mistake his figure, she was enabled to keep watch upon his movements, while remaining herself completely unknown. He seldom parted from a mask, which Catherine supposed to be that of the Contessa Monaldeschi, and his affianced bride; and passing near him in the crowd, she more than once heard distinctly the vows and protestations he was pouring into the ear of his new mistress. The revel, however, proceeded, and all present seemed happy save Catherine herself, whose mind was racked and torn by the struggle of contending emotions.

I should have remarked, that for two nights preceding the banquet, many of the citizens proceeding towards the Port' al Prato, vouched that they had seen the spectral torch appearing and disappearing over the palace, like the trail of a falling star, and



even now, while the company were so gaily laughing and amusing themselves in the gorgeous halls within, the signal of death flamed pale and ghastly over their heads ; foreshowing to the passer-by, that some spirit of the Zimenes line or affinity, then tabernacled in clay, would, ere the morning, be on its way to heaven or hell. But of this nought was known to the sprightly revellers within, who sipped the goblet, proceeded with the dance and the song, or listened to the harp and lute, as though there could be no end of our days on earth.

Shortly after midnight, Catherine missed Raimondo and the female mask which had appeared nearly all the evening by his side. It was not unusual in those ages for persons to retire for a brief space from the heated atmosphere of the ball-room, to enjoy the refreshing coolness of the garden, and thither accordingly Catherine concluded that Raimondo had betaken himself. In this persuasion she also left the ball-room, and wrapping herself in a cloak, walked forth into the garden. The night was moonless, but serene and clear, and the stars seeming to dilate in the pure transparent air, shed so strong a light, that bodies almost cast a shadow as when the moon is in the sky. The orange-trees, then in blossom, diffused their perfume far and wide, intermingled with the odours of the jasmine and the rose, and by regaling and soothing one sense, appearing to pave the way for the music of the nightingale to another. But these appeals to the senses were lost upon Catherine. Even that spiritual

harmony of the universe, wont at other times to descend so sweetly and with so much power upon her soul, was now unperceived in the turbulence of earthly passion. All her thoughts centered round the idea of Raimondo; and the conviction that he had betrayed and deserted her, that he despised her beauty, and made light of her love, kindled within her the maddening emotions of jealousy and revenge, which at once overwhelmed her reason, and yielded up her whole moral being to the impetuosity of her will. Strange and wayward is that power within us which in a moment can transform the object of love into an object of resentment; which can render beauty hateful, and tenderness itself a cause of aversion. Raimondo, in the mood her mind was now in, wore the aspect of a fiend, to be pursued and hunted down. The qualities which had once seemed good in him had withered into unsightly deformities.

In a frame of mind in which such notions and feelings predominated, did Catherine walk to and fro in these delightful gardens, and at length drew near these trees on my right hand. The Countess Ronaldeschi sat where I am now sitting, and Raimondo Baldini kneeling before her, poured forth with impassioned earnestness vows of eternal fidelity and love. The Countess, though she did not receive them with coldness, reminded him somewhat sportively of the position in which he stood to Catherine Zimenes. Raimondo, in an evil moment, and urged by his bad genius, uttered certain words, the import of which was never exactly known, but highly disparaging to the young

and beautiful lady to whom he had plighted his faith. He said he renounced her utterly from that moment, and with a baseness unaccountable, insinuated that the cause lay not in himself but in her; not in his own fickleness, but in her unworthiness. Upon this, the volcanic passions of Catherine, which had hitherto throughout life been kept by the force of reason within their proper channel, burst forth like a lava torrent, and bounding lightly forward and seizing his arm, she cried;

“It is false, Raimondo! My virtue and my name are unsullied; and the stain thou hast attempted to cast on them shall be washed out thus—”

And with these words she plunged her poinard into his breast, and he fell dead at her feet. The Countess Ronaldeschi's shrieks, loud and piercing, soon drew several individuals to the spot, who, like them, had been taking the air in the gardens; but Catherine had disappeared. Immediately on turning round these trees and gaining the terrace, she is said to have beheld the fatal torch streaming upward with tenfold brightness from the palace, foretelling what death I know not. The old Count, however, did not long survive, and Catherine was never more seen in Florence, though a tradition has come down even to our days, that she fled to the great convent, now ruined, at the upper extremity of the Vallambrosa, and there spent the remainder of her days in penitence and prayer.

### THE POET'S HERITAGE.

Poor and a Poet!—why, the king of old,  
Who turned whate'er he touched to purest gold,  
And she of fairy land, the favoured girl,  
Whose ev'ry word was frozen into pearl,  
Were only types of me :—come tell me where  
In earth, deep sea, or universal air,  
Where flower may blow, light fall, or rainbow shine,  
One spot, one speck exists, which is not mine ?  
Let the worm peering from his bed of clay  
Conjecture of the eagle, when his way  
Is paved with splendour ; let the hermit mole,  
That blind old sophist, in his learned hole,  
Take the bright stars to task ; but do not thou,  
With that earth-stained and lucre-loving brow,  
Look scorn on one, who, privileged to be  
Near unto heaven, is far removed from thee !  
    Spirit of beauty ! Nature ! mother mine !  
If well my soul hath worshipped at thy shrine ;  
If of the myriad children of thy birth  
I was the last entrusted to the earth,  
And sheltered longest in thy parent breast,—  
Thence grew, like Joseph, loved beyond the rest,—

Oh ! help me now with words of fitting scorn,  
Bright as the slanting splendours of the morn,  
That I may pierce this upstart earth-worm through  
With winged arrows such as those which flew  
When, like a stricken lyre, Apollo's bow  
Twanged the old dragon's death-song long ago !  
Talk'st thou of wealth ? Alas ! poor human gnome,  
Whose dwarfish soul hath made itself a home  
In some closed money-chest as in a mine,  
Look, if thou canst, one moment towards the shrine  
Of those immortal rays, which from the sun  
Gush earthward ever :—know, there is not one  
Of those bright atoms, which, when it hath lain  
Within the tried alembic of my brain,  
Turns not to precious thought — a costlier stream  
Stole not on youthful Danae's nuptial dream,  
When, like a new Pactolus over-bold,  
The wanton tide engulphed her in its gold !  
Say hast thou pearl ? For me the Nereids keep  
The hoarded treasures of the tranquil deep.  
Hast emerald ?—To bind *my* forehead weaves  
The deathless laurel all her wealth of leaves.  
Hast rubies ?—Pr'ythee, scorner, turn and see  
What crimson tears the vine hath wept for me.  
Hast coins ?—Oh ! tell me when they numbered are,  
And for each one I'll reckon thee — a star.  
Hast castles, lordships, towns ?—I do not fear ;  
Behold in me the ruler of a sphere,  
Which want can neither snatch, nor wealth impart—  
The guiltless empire of a trusting heart ;

A world that has its bright blue heaven above,  
Yet owns below an atmosphere of love ;  
An earth inhabited by earthly things,  
Yet blessed with heavenly thoughts, like angels' wings.

Then scorn the bard no more ; he is above,  
At once thy hate, thy pity, or thy love ;  
His world is not thy world, nor hast thou wings  
To follow to that sphere, whose charmed springs  
Can, like Medea's magic bath, restore  
The form of youth, when youth itself is o'er.  
Ashes to ashes—living earth to earth !  
Here have at once thy dwelling and thy birth :  
For me my soul shall build a palace home,  
Blue-roofed above by ether's ample dome,  
Where flowers shall drink the rainbow's tearful ray,  
And silver fountains warble night and day.  
Bright shapes of love shall throng around me there,  
Incarnate visions of the wise and fair ;  
There Lesbian Sappho, fresh from out the surge,  
Shall oft repeat, poor swan ! her ocean dirge ;  
And ministering spirits round me flock,  
Like those which soothed Prometheus on his rock.  
The stars shall make me music as they roll,  
And Jove's own nectar mantle in a bowl  
Fresh dewed by Hebe's lip ! Oh, who would lie  
Among the shards of earth, and never try  
One bold and skyward flight ? Poor spirit bird,  
Whose dust-defilèd plumes have never stirred  
Toward their ether-home ! say, wherefore build  
Thine own eternal prison cage, and gild

Its bars thus gaily ? Kuow'st not even he,  
The small mechanic of the mulberry tree,  
Who spins around, in many a patient fold,  
His filmy shroud of vegetable gold,—  
Dreams of some future time, when from the gloom  
That curtains round his ante-natal tomb,  
The sun shall wake to life a gorgeous thing  
With robe of feathered snow, and Psyche wing  
A child of light and air, an insect dove,  
Whose all of life is dedicate to love.

Open to all the application lies,  
Go to the worm, thou sluggard, and be wise !

## THE IRISH WEDDING.

IT was near the end of November, in the year 179— (as well as I can remember after the lapse of time) that I was seated by a glowing turf fire, making that genial compound of spirits and water generally known by the name of whisky punch : and as I luxuriously sipped the exhilarating beverage, my thoughts naturally revolved round the most powerful centre of attraction yet discovered—self ; then gradually reverted to the ultimate position which I appeared likely to occupy in this world.

I happened to be at that privileged age, somewhere between eighteen and twenty-five, when the young blood circulates freely, and the joyous heart prizes all others by its own temperature ; when bright thoughts tinge with their peculiar hue the every-day concerns of existence, and we see ourselves and our neighbours through that flattering medium which the French call “ *couleur de rose.*” Thus, the thin vapours gracefully curling above my tumbler could scarcely be suspected of obscuring my prospects, for, like a hazy morning at sea, the iron-bound coast, to which all are unconsciously piloting the life-boat, was veiled from



me. I dreamed but of the El Dorado beyond. Then I was cheerful in my ignorance of dangers around; now years are numbered on my head, care has marked my brow, and I look back through a lengthened succession of anxious days, to view the cold, bleak, and cutting asperities of the path over which I have toiled, and find, that which sages and philosophers have taught in vain, the unsatisfactoriness of all things! But I am getting into the clouds, and must protest against the slightest imputation of having indulged in too copious libations on the eventful night, to which I revert with that complacency which induces old soldiers to fight their battles over again.

My situation, though I was then perfectly content with its brilliancy, could not, in the language of advertisements, be termed extremely eligible,—the youngest ensign in a marching regiment, not overburthened with cash, without a single tie or connexion in the universe, just qualified to draw for a quarter's pay in the agent's hands, possessed of a tolerable kit, a better person, and a large share of animal spirits, which fitted me for the career to which I was destined.

The scene of my solitary vigil was an old castle on the western coast of Ireland, exposed to the rough breeze from the Atlantic which came bowling on in awful glory. The place was picturesque and lonely, and as the roaring waves dashed with perfect fury against the rocky pediment on which my habitation was erected, the ceaseless voice of the angry waters became at length an agreeable accompaniment to my reveries;

not so the rushing, howling, pitiless blast, that boomed round the high tower, sighing, shrieking in every crevice like the wild agony of an unquiet spirit, or else murmuring, with a mournful harmony, which brought the strange traditionary superstition of the Banshee to my mind.

On the night in question the elements were less poetical and more intrusive; the wind penetrated through a thousand apertures, and forced its way into the chamber wherein I was seated; the high, narrow, and arched casements which by day afforded a most extensive panorama of sea and land, now had to sustain a vigorous contest; the rain fell in torrents, and the storm rose to a terrific pitch of grandeur. My imagination slowly submitted to the gloomy ascendancy. I remembered a hundred circumstances, stories, and causes of alarm which I strove in vain to banish from my thoughts. The disturbed state of the country, the barbarous outrages of nocturnal recurrence, and the frightful scenes, of which I was a daily witness, oppressed and haunted me; the hurried and summary execution of two reputed rebels to which, *ex officio*, I had unfortunately been made a party, rose reproachfully in my recollection; the heart-rending lament which burst spontaneously from the warm adherents of the misguided yet gallant fellows, rang like a knell in my ears, and seemed to re-echo in the hoarse moanings of the storm.

I had already been quartered six months in this singular abode, the dismantled Castle of Dungarra: I had

grown familiar, nay, almost partial to the air of feudal grandeur that clung like ivy to its crumbling walls.

The family of M'Dermott, to whom it belonged, had removed to another and a more convenient residence, within a mile or two of the original stronghold wherein I was domiciliated, and which served as a temporary barrack for the accommodation of a small detachment of military. Two brothers were all that remained of an ancient and still influential race; their feudal importance had somewhat diminished amongst their equals, but every acre of the extensive hereditary possessions was occupied by a wild and devoted tenantry, such as can be no longer found in any corner of the globe, except in that misruled land wherein is laid the scene of my present narrative.

Sir Ulick M'Dermott, a proud yet weak man, was the representative of a long line, deriving illustration from Norman as well as Milesian descent. Kings of Ireland alternated with counts of the Roman Empire, knights of Jerusalem with knights of St. Patrick: the chronicled exploits of these distinguished progenitors were of the utmost importance in the estimation of the worthy baronet, all other considerations being swallowed up by the one ruling passion. Personally I knew very little of him, unless when seated at his table partaking of his frequent and truly national hospitality. He spoke seldom, rarely left his home; and mixed reluctantly in society; he was the sort of individual with whom one could not form an intimacy or proceed further than certain neutral topics, involving no slippery questions;

nevertheless, it was easy to discover illiberality and bigotry in the self-concentration and chilling silence which ensued, when a difficult or equivocal subject was unguardedly introduced.

He was married, but childless ; and report stated that he was exceedingly anxious for an immediate heir. The young brother, " Master Redmond," as he was almost universally denominated, was vivacious, romantic, and exceedingly reckless of consequences, seeming occasionally to make a sort of sport of the foibles which we have hinted at as being inherent to the elder scion of this ancient stock. Not that he was devoid of pride, but it was of a different kind : there existed a vein of chivalry in his character, that threw a grace and charm over deeds and words, of which the cold dignity of the Baronet was totally divested.

I had been stationed quite long enough at Dungarra to have exhausted every source of attainable amusement. I had collected the names and autographs of my predecessors, from various scrawls, carvings, pencillings, and chisellings upon the walls, doors, mantelpieces, and windows. I had become acquainted with sentiments and opinions, conveyed sometimes in felicitous rhymes, sometimes with impotent doggrel ; dates and initials gave rise to many idle trains of conjecture, and I learned to attach a separate history to the different sketches and caricatures that denoted that I was not the first man of genius who had pined for action within this dismal edifice. Often did I pace up and down the long arched corridor, listening to the



“Perhaps there are things on which I place more value than even life and death ; existence can only be forfeited *once*.”

“Ho ! ho !” thought I, “he is implicated in some awkward scrape, and wants me to extricate him.”

“Can I depend on you ?” cried he vehemently ; “we are indeed but recent acquaintance, yet something tells me that I am not mistaken. Will you serve me ?”

“I do not like chronology, either in matters of love or friendship ; sincerity is the only true test of the affections ; intensity must make up for duration, and we military feel as acutely under our brief transits from place to place, as if the local attachments of years had woven round our heart,—so command me.”

“Will you assist me ? will you act this night—as a witness—as a brother !!!” The speaker hesitated with a sort of convulsive effort as he uttered the last word.

“Of course you ask nothing contrary to my honour, my allegiance ?” enquired I, glancing at my uniform ; thinking that in such times of trouble, when every bosom harboured the seeds of insurrection, my companion, with whose perfect liberality of sentiment I happened to have some idea, might perhaps wish to initiate me into the mysteries of that occult association, successively known under the various names of United Irishmen, Ribbonmen, Terrys, White Feet, and Peep-o’-day boys, with a thousand others more or less appropriate.

“You wrong me, on my honour—I was disposed to

place confidence in you ; do not retract the assurance so recently proffered."

"Not so hasty—I meant no offence," replied I, endeavouring to appease my warm-tempered ally. "You have only to lead, and I will follow ;" saying these words, I buttoned my *surtout*, put on my oil-skin schakos, and taking down a Highland plaid, which had already seen as much service as myself, accompanied M'Dermott down the spiral stone stairs that led to the court below.

A blast of wind nearly threw me off my legs as we issued from the arched gateway, which was surmounted by a heavy portcullis, still in tolerable preservation. The cold pattering rain dashed in our faces and almost blinded me. I turned towards my companion, who seemed made of impenetrable stuff, neither heeding the war of elements, nor the inconvenience we both suffered, but proceeding at a quick pace, somewhat after the fashion of a water-dog, shaking the wet off occasionally, without appearing conscious of it. He took the advance, with a step firmer than mine, and rapidly gained ground ; my footing proving insecure as we wound along the sea-shore, scrambling over rocks, weeds, and slippery stones, wading through loose sand and deep pools. M'Dermott however walked on with as much ease as if he were sauntering over the green-sward of a race-course—he was evidently familiar with the rugged way.

Left considerably in the rear, I paused to take breath : it was impossible for me to arrest the progress

of Redmond. The roar of the surf, the moaning of the wind drowned my voice with their unearthly clamour. I could only keep a steady eye fixed upon the athletic form striding before me ; there was just enough of that grey dull light which lingers on the borders of the ocean long after the interior of the country is wrapped in shade, to allow me to distinguish the tall dark outline of my friend. At length he stopped, looked back, and I soon attained the spot where he was standing.

We were not far from a promontory, that jutted in stern relief from the cold hopeless horizon ; the intervening strand (if such a name could be given to any portion of this iron coast), was only passable at certain periods of the tide. A huge mass of rock, having been detached by some natural convulsion in bye-gone ages, now formed a sort of island, on which stood the ruins of a chapel. It was supposed that the building was anterior to the separation of the land, otherwise the place was not one that would be selected for an edifice of any kind. After a momentary halt, Redmond seized my hand, drew my arm within his, and hurried with renewed vigour in the direction of the ruin. I felt his heart beat violently ; his breathing was short and oppressed, and when I caught a faint glimpse of his countenance, it was marked with care and anxiety.

On turning the angle of the headland, a pale glimmering might be descried, proceeding from the broken aperture, which had once been an oriel window, and fell upon the angry surges lashing the shore : here we found a rude sort of embankment, which had only just

been abandoned by the waters, and following the line of loose stones and sea-weed that formed the causeway, we soon stood on the threshold of what once had been a chapel.

A stream of light shot along the earthen floor, caught the lower projections of the roof, and distinctly revealed three figures grouped before the stone altar within. We entered, and my companion immediately introduced one of the individuals as the reverend Father Flaherty; and, as I examined him rather attentively from head to foot, I thought a less reverend looking personage rarely came within my observation: his frame, short and thick, was surmounted by a clumsy head, stuck on a pair of round shoulders, and covered with a quantity of lank black hair unconscious of restraint; his eyes deep-set and dark-coloured, glared with that unmeaning brightness frequently produced by indulging in the use of spirituous liquors: his face, though bloated, was rather comely; his mouth, decidedly animal in its expression, might have been well shaped; whilst his dress was not only slovenly, but absolutely dirty in the extreme, exhaling a strong odour of tobacco and whiskey. A pair of jack boots, with long spurs, completed the external equipment of this very unclerical-looking priest.

The two other persons were females, evidently different in station, as in appearance; one of them, already past the middle age, from her dress and coarse features, belonged to the lower class. A red cloak was gathered over the head, as she sat or rather squatted in



a corner, fingering the beads of a rosary, and muttering a number of *aves* with more volubility than edification.

The third individual was so completely enveloped in drapery, that she presented no very distinct outline to the beholder, except that she was young and of gentle breeding, which might be deduced from a small white hand meekly crossed upon her breast.

"You are come, sir, to witness an act of justice," observed Mr. M'Dermott, solemnly. "Proceed with the ceremony, Flaherty."

Upon which the priest opened a well-thumbed volume, and hurried through the formula constituting the marriage contract according to the Roman Catholic ritual; while Redmond supported the trembling form of the lady who crouched rather than knelt on the damp ground. When it was time to produce the ring, Father Flaherty made a sudden stop; the bridegroom looked aghast, and the country woman fumbled fruitlessly in her pockets.

"Forgotten—by the holy St. Patrick!" exclaimed the reverend gentleman, with more impatience than piety. "I wouldn't doubt it; it's always the way with these runaways—they would forget their own identity if they were not reminded of it at times."

"The ring! the ring! for Heaven's sake, Flaherty; do not delay us. See, her strength is failing—she is sinking—dying!" responded M'Dermott, pressing the bending form of his affianced in his arms.

"Perhaps this English officer may be able to assist us. Now, Sir, have you any trinket to spare for

a while ? — just hand me a ring, no matter what sort.”

I was, however, destitute of ornament, and could not accommodate his reverence with the desired loan.

“ If we had but an ould curtain-ring, ’twould sarve the turn for once,” cried he, looking sharply round, as if in search of what was not likely to be found in such a location.

“ Would a key-ring do ?” inquired I, producing mine.

“ To be sure it will ; I’ll thank you to give it.”

So I swiftly detached the magic symbol from the bunch of keys, which it served to unite, and gave it to the ecclesiastic.

“ It is a bad omen,” mumbled the country woman, who had been whispering sundry observations in the lady’s ear.

“ Don’t be bothering us with any of your nonsense,” retorted Father Flaherty. “ Hold your tongue if you plaze, while I conclude the ceremony.” In a few moments the iron bond was placed on the trembling finger of the bride, and the nuptial benediction pronounced. Then, for the first time, I obtained a correct view of the person before me, in whom I recognized the daughter of a gentleman living in the neighbourhood ; but even a few weeks had wrought a vast and unaccountable change in her appearance ; her face bore the impress of suffering ; bodily as well as mental anguish was legible in the beautiful yet faded lineaments ; and on transferring my gaze from her features to her figure, the

ample cloak, slightly drawn aside, revealed her situation but too plainly. The colour rose to my temples, as I met the beseeching eyes of the new-made husband, which spoke volumes of love and remorse.

"Alice, dearest Alice!" cried he, clasping her wildly to his breast; "mine before God and man,—mine for ever, till death!!!"

"Till death!" echoed the matron: "What need ye be talking of death?—but no matter, she is a wife any how."

I looked round to see if there was a register or book, wherein to record the singular union, of which I had been witness, but there was none.

"We had better make a bit of an entry," observed Flaherty, pulling a dirty ink-horn, with a scrubby-looking pen, which had done some service in its day, from the cuff of his coat-sleeve; "only I have no paper about me, for I tore the last blank leaf out of my breviary last week."

"Perhaps my pocket-book may supply the deficiency," said I, abstracting a virgin sheet, and presenting it to him.

"If your honour would just turn secretary, and draw up a sort of certificate; for, to say truth, my limbs tremble so much with cold, I couldn't handle a pen for the life of me," rejoined the ecclesiastic.

Upon this I wrote a species of memorandum, certifying the solemnization of marriage between the parties, and the date thereof, which Flaherty signed with so much difficulty, that I perceived he was labouring under

a more *spirituous* influence, than the mere diminution of caloric. Next to the picturesque autograph of his reverence we affixed a cross, thus,—

her

NORA x BRADY,

mark.

Redmond wrote his name firmly and legibly, whilst I subscribed the document as witness, made a duplicate of the same, which I promised to keep, and handed the original to the shrinking bride; in her trepidation she let it fall, and the wind drifted it towards the entrance of the ruin, where it fluttered a moment in the wan rays of the moon. Nora Brady rushed forward, and seized the paper, and bringing back the prize, thrust it rudely into the bosom of her mistress, saying;

“That was another bad omen—now keep *that* safe, agrah; there’s no knowing the time when you and yours may want that scrap o’ writin’.”

“I must leave thee, dearest, for our friend is under the necessity of returning to his quarters,” quoth Redmond, seeing me prepare to retire; “I will escort you to Dungarra in safety,” added he.

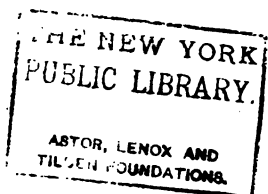
“No, no, your presence is required elsewhere. I can dispense with your companionship to-night; besides, any dog can find his way home.”

M'Dermott hesitated; but Father Flaherty intervened very opportunely in the discussion, by assuring me that our road lay in the same direction, and that he would have the pleasure of being my guide on the occasion. I clasped the bridegroom's hand in silence, and

gently returning the soft pressure with which the bride sought to convey her mute acknowledgments, took my leave.

We never met again.—I received orders to join headquarters, and sailed with the regiment soon after for India.

What was the fate of the pair, I never heard ; but I have often thought that the worst omen of that night was the sin which had wrought the shame ; and is ever the bitter earnest of sorrow. How often, nay, how surely, do our early errors cast a shade upon our path, which no after burst of sunshine has power to dispel !





W. H. H. del.

R. H. H. sculp.

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL.

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL.

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## THE PLAGUE-TREASURE.

BY J. A. ST. JOHN.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE FISHERMEN AT FAULT.

AT the mouth of the little river Elicona, on the northern coast of Sicily, there is a small fishing village, known by the euphonious name of San Felice. The cottages of the fishermen run in a straggling line along the shore on the western bank of the stream, while the dwellings of the wealthier and more aristocratic portion of the community stand at a greater distance from the sea, on the sharp slope of a hill, in the midst of orange and citron groves. The dwellers in this part of the village, generally small proprietors engaged in agriculture, looked down, both physically and figuratively, on the humble individuals inhabiting the cottages along the shore. There was consequently little intercourse between the upper and the lower quarters, as they were called, though neither class of the population disdained to profit by the labours of the other.

Among the rough and hardy youths engaged in the

operations of the fishery was Teodulo, an orphan, who, in conjunction with two other young men of nearly his own age, owned a boat, which was generally observed to be the first to put to sea, the last to re-enter the port, nearly always well laden. The fish usually taken on this part of the coast is the *pesce spada*, which, together with the tunny, is harpooned by day ; but another branch of their trade consists in taking the mullet and dory, with other small fish, which is performed by night.

On a fine summer's evening, in the month of June, when the whole surface of the sea from the Sicilian coast to the island of Stromboli and Felicudi, on the edge of the horizon, was smooth and unruffled, forming a mirror for reflecting the creations of the *fata morgana*, Teodulo and his companions put out, on their usual occupation, their trim little boat. The torch designed to attract and dazzle their prey was already kindled, and held by Basillo at the stern of the boat, while Teodulo and Firmino balanced their harpoons ready to strike. But San Felice, the patron of their village, and of the whole sea in their neighbourhood, had, on this occasion, determined to afflict them with disappointment. Not a mullet or dory showed its nose above water. The whole species seemed to have forsaken the coast, and their torch burned, and their harpoons glittered in vain.

After waiting patiently for several hours, and venting much unprofitable anger against their patron saint, the young men, in a fit of ill-humour, extinguished

their braid in the waves, and, sitting down in the almost motionless boat, began to deplore their present misfortunes, and the general hardship of their lot.

While they were engaged in this interesting kind of conversation, the moon rose from behind the hills of Messina, and lighted up a landscape unrivalled, perhaps, in the world. Far as the eye could reach northward, the pale effulgence of the moon glittered on the rippling waters, out of which the dusky volcanic cones of the Æolian islands, arose like so many pyramidal tents. The circle of the bay on which their village stood, swept round them in magnificent curvature, projecting east and west, at Milazzo and Tindari, its horns into the sea. Upon these headlands the eye rested with delight, rising from one step to another of the woody terraces, which, retreating backwards, at length conducted the sight to the summits of the Madonia range, through a wide gap in which was discovered the snowy peak of Etna, now free from smoke, and sleeping like a giant in the moonlight. Eastward stretched the lower ridges of Calabria, losing themselves gradually in the distance, and suggesting to the minds of the Sicilian fishermen strange ideas based on many a legendary tale. Their own boat on the currentless and windless bay, appeared to repose like a huge sea-bird in its own shadow.

The thoughts and conversation of the young men, after floating and eddying round various subjects, gradually circled about a topic, which had often presented itself to their mind; but had as often been shrunk from as a thing too dangerous to approach.

Which of the young men it was that first trespassed on this forbidden ground I could never positively learn ; but it was always, at San Felice, believed to have been Teodulo. At all events, the idea once started, he seized upon it with avidity, and earnestly urged upon his companions the necessity they were under of despising the prejudices of their towns-people, and setting even the laws themselves at defiance.

“ It will be our own fault,” said he, “ if we do not conduct the affair so secretly as to escape detection : I have, from a boy, been familiar with all that part of the country where the treasure is said to be. I can see it now. Look, just where the valley makes a bend towards the right, between yonder woody peaks, exactly in a line with the convent which you behold : there is the spot.”

“ Well,” replied Basillo, “ suppose our digging escape observation, is there not reason to believe that infection still clings to the gold, and that we may perish by the very riches we shall have ourselves unearthed ?”

“ Ay, and what is more,” observed Firmino, “ who can tell but we may give the plague to the whole village, and so be the means of cutting off both father and mother, and friends and neighbours ? Besides, Teodulo, you know what they say respecting the sights people sometimes see in the Val Demoni ;—how the devils come forth in troops like apes, and leap, squeaking fiendishly, upon the shoulders of the shepherd or traveller who passes that way, and ride them to death, or urge them headlong over the rocks.”

“ These reasons for forbearance,” replied Teodulo, “ are very strong ; but I oppose to them the actual sufferings of poverty, and the dread of worse hereafter, when age shall come upon us, and we may have families depending on our labour for bread.”

Teodulo had another reason to which he did not think proper to allude, nor shall we at this time divulge his secret. The discussion, however, was carried on with animation ; one dwelling on the advantages of the undertaking, the others on its dangers ; but it ended by the whole three coming to a resolution to set all hazards at defiance, and commence the search on the following night.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE VALLEY OF DEVILS.

IN the last great plague which desolated Sicily, it was believed that the treasure of the Count di Castelnero, the ruins of whose chateau may still be seen on the banks of the Elicona, was buried in the skirts of the forest which surrounded his dwelling, and covered and adorned all the neighbouring heights. Similar treasures were said to have been, on the same occasion, deposited in various other parts of the Val Demoni or Valley of Devils, a name bestowed on all that corner of the island ; but belonging more particularly to the gloomy ravine, commencing at the Black Castle, and penetrating backwards, between rocks and precipices, into the very heart of the forests. Some of these repositories

had several times been rifled, and because, immediately afterwards, malignant and fatal fevers, in their character and effects resembling the plague, had broken out, a law was at length passed forbidding people to dig for the plague-treasures under pain of death. It was in contravention of this decree that Teodulo and his friends were now about to act.

I have said above, that the young fisherman, whose history I am relating, had a reason for setting the laws at defiance, which he did not choose to communicate to his friends, and which I shall now explain. Among the landed proprietors, anglicè country gentlemen, who constituted the aristocracy of San Felice, was Messer Marco Petronelli, who, besides being owner of a very pretty cantle of land, was possessed of a daughter known by the sweet name of Angelica, and esteemed, for her beauty, the very flower of San Felice. On this young lady, whose face the reader will presently have an opportunity of contemplating, the ambitious fisherman had dared to cast an eye of affection; and, very marvellous to tell, she herself, despite of what her parents called her high-born hopes, condescended to smile on the addresses of her humble lover; so far forgetting the dignity of her station as to indulge him with private interviews, and seriously to meditate bestowing upon him her hand. It was always understood, however, as a preliminary arrangement, that Teodulo, one way or another, was to grow rich; but though their affection was already of some standing, the honest young man seemed as far as ever from

realizing his golden visions, and consequently from the hand of Angelica.

Early in the evening which succeeded the little incident we have above described, Teodulo met his lady mistress, whom, with a broad smile, and eyes flashing with hope, he informed that something which he would not explain, was to happen, which would speedily put an end to the delay equally tedious in the eyes of both. Angelica, it may be presumed, was very pressing to discover the ground of her lover's expectations, and, as they walked to and fro beneath the vine trellices in her father's garden, commanding at intervals a lively prospect over the sea and shores below, put to him a series of adroit questions, which he as adroitly parried, taking shelter under general affirmations; but confidently assuring her that the term of his probation was at hand, and that a few days in fact would see him approach her father with proposals of marriage, backed by arguments not to be resisted. Farther than this he positively refused to explain, and after a visit somewhat imprudently protracted, snatched himself away from the fascination of the spot to join his companions on their perilous errand. The whole population of San Felice, laudably addicted to early hours, were now snug in their beds, with the exception of some stray thief, or lover, prowling about on his own designs, when the three treasure-seekers, confident that they were unperceived, put out to sea in their boat, into which spades and pick-axes had been privately conveyed; and, making for a retired part of the shore, drew up in a small creek,



fastened their bark to a tree, and then boldly sallied up towards the Val Demoni.

The left bank of the Elicona, as the traveller in Sicily will remember, is covered by a succession of pomegranate and lemon groves, traversed by umbrageous pathways formed by the feet of the peasantry. In some places the track issues from the wood, and runs for a considerable distance on the edge of the stream, which comes down, rattling over its rocky pebbly bed in noise and foam. Here and there the groves are separated from each other by rich meadows, kept in eternal verdure by the moisture diffused from the river, and covered throughout the summer with a profusion of odoriferous flowers. In the immediate neighbourhood of the Black Castle the scene changes, and suddenly assumes a rocky, precipitous, and gloomy character, with woods impending over narrow passes impervious to the light even by day. Through these, however, the fishermen, following on the heels of Teodulo, rapidly made their way, and at length reached the mouth of the ravine, where, according to tradition, the plague-treasures had been buried.

The place, now dimly visible by the light of the moon struggling downward between huge masses of rock and foliage, presented a very peculiar aspect. It was a small flat, covered with long dank grass, surrounded on three sides by trees of gigantic growth, and terminating towards the right at the river's brink, looking more like the wreck of a deserted church-yard, than a place for concealing gold. Here the three

friends immediately began to dig eagerly, and more than once their mattocks striking against some stone or rock caused their hearts to leap with expectation ; but on clearing away the earth, disappointment followed ; and having wearied themselves to no purpose, they at length quitted the search, for the present, in order that they might reach their homes before day.

As neither Teodulo nor his friends had any other dependence than on the labour of their hands, they were compelled, every other night at least, to forego their agreeable occupation in the ravine, and have recourse to their boat for support ; but giving up so much time as they did to a fruitless search, continuing week after week to divide their labour between the sea and land, the only treasure they seemed likely to find was that of poverty. Even this, however, fate had determined they should not enjoy in peace.

It was not to be expected that a young lady so lovely as Angelica should have written no other eyes than those of the fisherman. She had accordingly many lovers, some of whom chiefly admired the broad acres of her father, some his tasteful house and pleasant garden ; while, not to be too severe on human nature, we acknowledge there were two or three whose regards were bestowed on Angelica herself. Belonging to one of the former classes, was Messer Damiano, a man equally selfish and revengeful, who, having carefully studied appearances, and weighed the pretensions of his rivals, discovered that he had little to fear from any of them, save him, who of all would have been least

likely, in the world's eye, to cause him a moment's uneasiness. I mean Teodulo, through the disguises of whose well-dissembled passion, and the equally well-dissembled return it met with, the lynx-eye of Damiano succeeded in penetrating. Ashamed, however, of appearing to be foiled by a simple fisherman, he refrained from making known his discovery to Messer Petronelli; but determined, as a preferable course, to clear his way to his mistress's heart or fortune, by the removal of Teodulo. Upon his movements, therefore, he had long kept an eye. He had watched him go forth at night in his boat, and return in the morning; and most devoutly prayed to all the saints in the calendar, that some storm of the devil's raising would send him to the bottom. Neither the saints nor the devil, however, appeared to befriend him in this matter; so muttering the old truism, that heaven helps those who help themselves, he set his own fertile wits to work to invent some feasible plan for ridding himself of his humble rival. Whether he succeeded or not, will appear in the sequel; very certain it is that the fisherman and his friends conceived themselves to be wholly unobserved, and proceeded with their excavations as diligently as so many grave-diggers.

### CHAPTER III.

#### WHAT HAPPENED IN THE VALLEY.

It will readily be believed that the repeated disappointments of Teodulo, were not borne with philoso-

phical calmness. Nature herself had ill-fitted him to play the part of a stoic, and the half sportive, half melancholy inquiries of Angelica, united with the reproachful looks and desponding language of his friends, pierced him to the heart ; so that from having been one of the liveliest, most cheerful and buoyant spirits in San Felice, he became by degrees silent and care-smitten.

On one of the evenings set apart for digging, they were compelled by an accident to abandon the rules they had laid down for themselves : the wind blew so high that it was impossible to put to sea in their boat ; but as their resolution appeared to increase as the chances of success diminished, they would not be deterred by this circumstance from pursuing their voluntary task ; but set out on foot at an early hour towards the valley. The weather was very peculiar ; there was no rain, neither could many clouds be seen, and yet the wind poured down the steep slopes of the mountains, like an invisible deluge, roaring and committing furious devastation in the forest. When the young men entered the woods they were stricken with no small degree of terror, on contemplating the features of the scene around them. Looking upward through the swinging and groaning boughs, they could behold the stars which appeared to dance in the heavens, while from time to time, their ears were stunned by the breaking away of some giant tree from its precipitous nest among the lofty cliffs, and descending with thundering crash upon the woods below. More than once Basillo

and Firmino entreated their companion to give up the undertaking for that night; but he was obstinate, and determined to persevere. The loud voice and footsteps of the storm so completely monopolized their attention, that they could think of nothing else, otherwise they might have perceived that they were not the only persons who were travelling towards the spot where the treasure lay concealed. Another company, more numerous than theirs, crept stealthily at their heels, so as almost constantly to command a view of them, while they themselves remained concealed beneath the shadows of the trees. Ignorant of this circumstance, the fishermen hurried forward, feeling their imaginations elated at times by the danger which surrounded them, though the quick throb and hurried palpitation of their hearts appeared to indicate, by a kind of instinctive presentiment, the approach of evil.

Accident often causes a kind of harmony between base and treacherous deeds, and the scene in which they are performed. This, on the present occasion, was the case. A chain of enemies invisibly encircled the humble treasure-seekers, watched their footsteps, and prepared to pounce upon them at the most inauspicious moment. Farther removed, however, in the dim background of events, lay another source of hope and fear, equally unknown to the betrayers and the betrayed. By what motives each were actuated, may hereafter appear: for the present it will be sufficient to say, that while one party kept watch over the movements of

lo and his companions, another watched the  
ers.

enthusiastic excavators had now some time  
d. The moon had not yet risen, and the star-  
obstructed every moment by the waving and  
g sea of boughs over-head, was of scarcely any  
To remedy this inconvenience the fishermen had  
ht along with them a torch, which with flint and  
they soon kindled, and stuck into the earth at  
ery edge of the pit they were clearing out,  
so capacious that it might, without much diffi-  
have concealed half the treasures in Sicily.  
mounds of soil, thrown up on all sides, disfigured  
alf covered the little plateau which they had  
so green and grassy; and they had conducted  
excavation so near the river's brink, that the  
already began to exhibit an inclination to ooze  
h the earthy screen, and render their work in  
art uncomfortable.

picture which the scene presented to the eye  
otesque and striking. The three fishermen, bend-  
wn over their mattocks, were digging as eagerly  
hey had expected to find a principality in the  
hile the unruly gust sweeping down the ravine,  
mouth of which their excavations were carried  
sed to and fro the smoky pitch-fed flame of the  
casting a ruddy glare over the trunks of the  
rees, which stretched in rank, and file, like so  
giants about the flat. The eye of Firmino, who  
th stood upright to rest his back a little, glanc-

ing round at the screen of foliage, which wore a curious aspect in the torch-light, appeared suddenly to rest on something which immediately brought his heart into his throat, and caused the pickaxe to drop from his hand. Constitutionally superstitious, and with a fancy highly wrought upon by the strange and lawless occupation in which he was engaged, he was in momentary expectation of a visit from the ancient legendary inhabitants of the valley ; and now he saw, or seemed to see, a row of devilish faces, smiling and grinning upon them from between the trunks of the trees. He immediately communicated his suspicions to his companions, who, at first inclined to laugh at him, were soon convinced, by the evidence of their own senses, that, whether the intruders were men or devils, they themselves were discovered, and might in consequence be called upon to pay the forfeit of their lives. The first movement of Teodulo was to hurl the torch into the river, which he had scarcely done before a number of men rushed upon, surrounded, and made them prisoners even in the pit itself.

Two or three of their captors now took out small lanterns from under their cloaks, by the light of which Teodulo perceived that they were in the hands of the Sbirri, under the direction of his old rival Damiano, who taunted and insulted him with a bitter joy, which none but rivals can feel. Good strong cords were forthwith produced ; the hands of the prisoners were tied behind their backs, and all three loosely connected together by a rope ; which done, the officers of police,

moving a-head, began to conduct the way down the valley.

They had not, however, proceeded far before affairs assumed a new aspect. A man springing forward from among the bushes, stood facing them in the pathway tolerably well lighted up by the Sbirri's lanterns, and commanded them to release their prisoners. Several other men dropping down on various sides from the rocks formed a line across the track, and by their dress and weapons were soon known to be the followers of the bandit chief Ercole, brother of Basillo. The present leader, however, was not that formidable robber ; but his lieutenant, Araldo, who coolly explained to the police who he was, and his motives for undertaking to deliver the prisoners.

“ Look you,” said he ; “ though Basillo there has not the courage to join his brother in the mountains, but is poor spirited enough to prefer the mean occupation of a fisherman to the honourable life of a bandit, Ercole will not allow him to be molested. You know my captain ; if his commands be disobeyed he will reduce San Felice to ashes, cut your throats every one, and fling your worthless carcasses into the sea, to be food for Basillo's mullets. So take my advice, and give up the prisoners quietly. I had due notice of your movements, and could have prevented your taking them ; but was willing to convince you, in this manner, how superior our power is to that of the law.”

The Sbirri, though no fire-eaters, were yet sufficient arithmeticians to discover that they were at least four



to one, and therefore resolved, for this time, not to knock under to the banditti. In a haughty tone they commanded Araldo to move out of the way, and upon his contemptuous refusal, the long guns of the Sbirri were immediately presented and fired. One of the bandits dropped, upon which the others, discharging their carbines, and drawing their swords, rushed upon the police, and a desperate conflict ensued, in the midst of which Damiano attempted to effect his escape. For this purpose he sidled off towards the left, but one of the robbers keeping his eye upon him as he moved crouchingly towards the bank of the river, seized his arm with a lion's gripe, and whispering in his ear "Erocle has business with you;" sought to drag him up the glen. But the traitor, rendered desperate by terror, offered a furious resistance; upon which the robber closed with him, threw his arms about his body, and endeavoured to lift him from the ground. In the struggle their feet slipped, and, the bank being somewhat steep, they rolled downward together, and fell into the river. Still the bandit would not let go his hold, but, drenched and dripping as they were, he drew his prisoner on shore, where he put an end to all resistance by swearing that if he did not go quietly along with him, he would put his dagger to its right use, and leave his body where they stood. Brought to reason by this delicate insinuation, Damiano allowed himself to be bound and conducted captive to the Val Demoni.

Meanwhile the combat proceeded with unexampled

fury on the other side of the stream. Both Sbirri and bandits exhibited proofs of undoubted valour. The firing of muskets, of carbines, of pistols, was of short continuance; there being no possibility of reloading in the dark amidst the shocks of repeated attacks. But the fight was continued with sword and dagger until several had fallen on both sides: at length, numbers carried it. The bandits were completely routed, and compelled to retreat; while the Sbirri, elated with their victory, though purchased by several lives, proceeded with their prisoners down the valley. It was now discovered that Damiano was missing, but it was not thought prudent to make any search for him; so, without much caring whether he were dead or captive, they made the best of their way to San Felice; from whence, at day-break, the prisoners were hurried away to Messina.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ERCOLE AT HOME.

THE power of the bandit chief, Ercole, being familiar to all readers of recent Sicilian history, who are aware that for many years he set the government at defiance, and compelled it to take a portion of his band into its service, I shall not dwell on that well-known fact, but proceed to explain his relation with the fisherman, Basillo. Ercole was the eldest of a numerous family of sons, who had all, with the exception of Basillo, embraced the profession, honourable and respected in

Sicily, of a robber. Ercole of course first entered the band as an ordinary thief, but exhibiting great talent and expertness in his business, united with indomitable energy and courage *à toute épreuve*, he gradually rose to the rank of chief. His followers were so numerous as to constitute a small army, divided into two classes, one of which might be said to live in camp, under the immediate eye of their commander ; while the other, dispersed through all the neighbouring towns and villages, carried on various trades and professions ; disposed of the booty taken by their brethren, and furnished them with whatever intelligence it imported them to obtain. Basillo, however, kept up no correspondence with his daring and powerful brother, content to live in obscurity, though, as has been seen, not insensible to the charms of wealth, if it could be honestly obtained. He was beheld with affectionate pity by Ercole, who though he could not make a gentleman of him, still felt in his behalf the strong tie of blood, and was resolved that no evil which he could avert should befall him.

When information respecting the treachery of Damiano reached the mountain retreat of the banditti, Ercole was absent, with nearly all his forces ; but his lieutenant, Araldo, who trusted, as he was well authorized to do, in the magic of their name, resolved on attempting the rescue of Basillo, in the manner and with the result before described. Having failed in their enterprise, a thing wholly unusual with them, the robbers returned in no very pleasant humour towards their haunts, in order to receive the orders of their

chief, respecting their further movements. Damiano, as we may be sure, was not treated with too much gentleness; he was, in fact, comforted with the assurance that if anything untoward happened to the fisherman, he should be roasted to death before a slow fire.

Their home, which they reached by the evening of the following day, lay in those vast volcanic caverns with which the mountains, in all that part of the island, are perforated like a rabbit-warren; many of them having several adits and exits, and branching and extending for miles through the porous rocks. When Ercole, after a somewhat protracted absence, returned, Damiano beheld with terror the grim ferocious countenances which thronged around him.

Informed of what had taken place, the chief, seated in a huge chair cut in the lava, and waited on by numerous attendants, with torches, the light of which exhibited the vastness but not the whole dimensions of the dusky cavern, commanded Damiano before him, and placing in his hands a letter, said, "Messer Damiano, you know me. I utter neither reproaches nor threats. Deliver that to the Prince of Villafranca. It will be followed by the liberation of my brother and his companions. You will know that they owe their safety to me, and that knowledge will inform you that it is not safe for any man in this part of Sicily, to expose himself to my anger. Go, do exactly as I bid you, and then return to your village, where, if you conduct yourself properly, you will be suffered to live

unmolested. A party of my men will conduct you to the gates of Messina. You now know your errand."

Damiano had penetrated too far into the character of Ercole, and was too much impressed with respect for his person, to dream of disobeying; and while he proceeds to execute the commission wherewith he had been entrusted, we shall return to San Felice.

#### CHAPTER V.

##### HOW THE MATTER ENDED.

ON the morning which succeeded the capture of the treasure-seekers, the history of the whole transaction had found its way, before breakfast, to the fire-side of each house in the village. Every body was thrown into consternation. The parents and relations of Basillo and Fermino were overwhelmed with affliction, and the youthful friends of Teodulo, who for his vivacity and kindly disposition was much beloved, exhibited tokens of almost equal grief; while a shudder communicated from breast to breast by the secret conductor of superstition, seized every inhabitant of the village. Not knowing whether the grave of the plague-smitten gold had been discovered or not, they feared lest the contagion might already be invincibly spreading,—lest the very atmosphere might be infected and the deadly virus be even now rioting in their veins. During the whole day no man had the courage to put to sea; the boats lay rocking on the waves; everybody fasted; candles without number were lighted before

images and pictures of the Virgin and their patron saint; and so many vows were made, that they quite clogged the atmosphere, and impeded each others progress upwards.

But though the consternation was pretty general, no one felt so poignant an anguish as Angelica, whose love for Teodulo was sincere and deep, as it was imprudent and unworldly. She learned every particular of what had taken place from her old nurse, Biasia, who made the tour of the village somewhat early, for the purpose of collecting information. Her parents, though perhaps not wholly unsuspicious of the preference she felt for Teodulo, regarded it as a mere freak of youthful fancy which good sense and experience would in due time put to flight. They beheld, however, with much anxiety, the altered appearance which she this morning presented on entering the cheerful little apartment opening into the flower garden, where they were seated at breakfast. The delicious white cakes, the crimson pomegranates, the rich luscious bunches of grapes, black and green, which were piled on the small marble table round the coffee-tray, lay untouched by her fair hand. When pressed by her mother, she made an effort to eat, listening anxiously to the remarks her father was making on the affair of the preceding night. The old man expressed his sorrow for what had happened, particularly on account of Teodulo, a youth of whom he professed to think very favourably,—so favourably indeed, that he had intended, he said, to recommend him as a son-in-law to his vine-dresser, Giovanni Smarachi ;

but now his awful attempt at breaking a law necessary for the public safety, would defeat everybody's hopes in favour of him; he would be cut off in the flower of his age. There was no hope of escape, no chance of any commutation of punishment.

At these words Angelica fell back in her chair. The paleness of death came over her countenance, and she would have dropped to the floor, had not her mother and her nurse hastened to support her. When a little recovered, she professed to feel so extreme a dread of the plague, that the very thought of it had overcome her.

Petronelli listened attentively to her explanation, as if he had devoutly believed every word of it, labouring by various arguments to remove her fears, though in truth he was not very far from experiencing similar apprehensions himself.

Whatever might have been his motives for so doing, he returned again to the probable consequences of the act to its perpetrators, and observed that it again produced the same effect upon his simple-minded daughter. This confirmed the suspicions which, as I have already hinted, had often crossed his mind. He was by no means a selfish man or a sanguinary, but if the law visited Teodulo with condign punishment, which upon the face of the matter seemed highly probable, why then his daughter might make a more worthy choice from among persons of her own class, and be as highly respected by the world as her mother had been before her. Still he entertained no absolute malice against the young man, and if the punishment of death could

be commuted to the more lenient visitation of perpetual confinement on board the galleys, it would afford him much satisfaction, and he was determined to exert whatever influence he possessed in his favour.

Angelica sought as far as possible to command her feelings, but as soon as she found herself alone in her little chamber, gave full vent to them in a flood of tears. She passed in review before her mind the few incidents and events that had chequered her short career, and many times severely blamed herself for having suffered her affection to settle itself on one so much beneath her, in the opinion of society, and whom it was not probable that any event would bring her parents to approve. Still it had never been her design to act contrary to their will. Her affections had wandered involuntarily; but her resolution had always been not to transgress the sacred law of duty, but to obtain, by entreaty and as a boon from the tenderness of her parents, the permission to be united to the man of her choice. Unions not greatly dissimilar had more than once taken place among the different classes of the villagers, who after all, she thought, were but peasantry of different grades, in which she was not far from the truth. But now the question was, could she do aught to save the life of Teodulo? At one time she determined to throw herself at her father's feet, and conjure him to intercede with the prince of Villa Franca for her lover; at another time she thought her tears and entreaties might sooner work upon maternal affection; then again the idea flashed across her mind, that she would of herself pro-



ceed secretly to Messina to plead for the life of Teodulo. Her timidity, however, was great: she one moment formed determinations which the very next moment saw perish. Doubt, anxiety, apprehension, rapidly succeeded each other, and so prolonged and fearful was the state of excitement which she experienced, that her mind seemed about to give way. Through various persons she learned that the trial of the prisoners would not speedily come on, and her hope was that in the interval she might be able to devise some plan for obtaining permission to visit Messina, in order to extort a pardon from the humanity of the prince. Her mind at length settled in its leaning towards this course; and while meditating on the means of effecting her purpose, she was accustomed to walk in the dusk of the evening in that vine-shaded alley, where she had often, in happier hours, met her lover. The festivities of the Vara were approaching, and she hoped that during its celebration, when all persons, of whatever rank, crowd to Messina, Providence might point out to her some opportunity of presenting her humble petition to the prince. As thoughts like these were passing in her mind, the figure of a man moving towards her, appeared at the further extremity of the walk. Greatly alarmed, her first thought was to effect her escape, but while she was deliberating, time was allowed for the figure to draw near. The object of her apprehensions excited a very different feeling. It was Teodulo himself. With a wild scream of joy she bounded forward to meet him, and falling upon his

neck, indulged for some time her emotions in silence. His own utterance was choked with rapture, which the recollection of his unhappy position, however, speedily dashed and subdued. He had, on his way home from prison, from which the application of Ercole had released him, formed the design of quitting San Felice, and had now come to impart his resolution to Angelica, and take leave of her for a time at least, if not for ever. When the tumult of their feelings had somewhat subsided, they mutually communicated their thoughts, Angelica protesting before Heaven that, though nothing could induce her to act undutifully towards her parents, she would yet firmly resist all attempts to unite her to another man. By various arguments she convinced Teodulo that it would be better to remain concealed for a few days somewhere in the neighbourhood, while she broke her mind to her mother, and endeavoured to obtain her countenance. To his own cottage he was ashamed to return, looking upon himself as the laughing-stock of the whole village.

It has been often observed that when any absurd or impracticable scheme presents itself to a man's mind, and is for some time acted upon, it seldom fails in the long run to accomplish his ruin. Teodulo appeared about to afford an example in illustration of this truth, for no sooner had he quitted his mistress, than attracted like a gambler by the billiard table, or a stock-jobber by the exchange, he hurried away with anxious step towards the Val Demoni. Crossing the Elicona, he entered once more the well-known path, following the

windings of which, he in a short time reached the spot which had, to him and to others, been the source of so much calamity. The night was indescribably calm; a breathless stillness brooded over the woods. The very river seemed to have hushed and quieted its murmurs, and the liquid lustre of the stars was, here and there, reflected from its breast. On reaching the edge of the pit which he and his companions had scooped out with so much difficulty, he found that the water had washed away the earthen screen which had divided it from the river, and filled it entirely. Whatever hopes therefore he might have entertained of re-commencing his undertaking were now at an end. After looking wistfully a long time, with troubled thoughts and giddy brain, at the pool, where, instead of the sought-for treasures, he beheld the golden images of the stars, his eyes were suddenly filled with tears, and, crossing the stream in despair, he sat down on a rock close to its margin, where he gave full vent to his sorrow.

In this situation he remained till day-break, chained as if by some fascination to the source of all his misfortunes. He held a staff in his hand with which, as musing men are apt to do, he kept knocking to and fro the loose earth and stones which lay at his feet, and observed that the water, in flowing into the excavation had deserted their former channel, which was covered with weeds and mud. It was these that he was tossing about with his staff, when suddenly its point stuck fast in something from which it was disengaged with difficulty. Stooping down to ascertain the cause, he

discovered a small metal ring, at the sight of which all his former hopes instantaneously revived. First looking around to observe whether he was again watched, he hastily cleared away the mud with his hands and saw before him the top of an iron chest. It was fast locked, but with one of the pickaxes which he found in the grass where he and his companions had left them, he at length burst it open, and behold it was filled with gold. Not one piece, however, did Teodulo appropriate to himself. He closed the lid, covered it over with mud and weeds, and returning in the evening to the village, revealed the fact to his companions. They were easily persuaded to set the law once more at defiance, and in the course of that night the contents of the chest, fairly divided, were deposited in the cottages of Teodulo and his friends. It will readily be imagined that no obstacle to Teodulo's union with Angelica now remained. His marriage was immediately solemnized, upon which the humble fisherman was transformed into a landed proprietor, and took up his quarters in the aristocratic domicile of Messer Marco Petronelli.

## THE EPILOGUE.

FIVE or six years after the events narrated in the preceding chapter, I passed a few days with my friend Salter at San Felice, on our way from Palermo to Messina. Being both great admirers of Catholic churches—of the treasures of art they contain, and still more of

the laudable spirit that keeps them open at all hours to the devotion and piety of the natives and strangers, we strolled up early in the morning to the romantic little hill on which the shrine of San Felice is situated. On approaching the edifice, we overtook a gentleman who appeared to be proceeding thither on the same errand as ourselves. Having crossed the churchyard, we beheld, on turning round a projecting buttress, a sight far transcending the merits of any picture in Sicily. It was a mother with her two children, who having been paying her devotions at the shrine of the Virgin, was now issuing forth into the morning air, her heart filled with love and holy joy, and her face beaming brightly with maternal tenderness. Her eldest child, pressing close to her side on the right hand, pulled sportively at the end of her kerchief. The younger, a lovely boy of about two years old, was seated on her left shoulder, and had evidently been playing with the tangles of her hair. Upon him the mother's eyes were bent upwards with a look of inexpressible love. Her fair neck and exquisite countenance were lighted up with the beams of the morning sun, while a black cross, the symbol of her faith, hung suspended on her bosom. My friend, passionately admiring whatever is beautiful, exclaimed, "Would to Heaven I might be permitted to sketch that lady as she stands!" The stranger, who was within hearing, turned round sharply, and eyeing us from head to foot, observed with evident pleasure and animation, "Why so you may, sir, for 'tis my wife."

The pencil was immediately out, and on a card which

the artist carried in his pocket the first sketch was made of the beautiful picture, a representation of which the reader here beholds. The acquaintance commenced in this casual rencontre did not terminate here. Messer Teodulo, for it was he, invited us to his home, where we remained several weeks, admiring at once the sweetness and delicacy of his wife and children, and the moral beauty and noble spirit of affection which brooded over the whole household. From the lips of the happy pair themselves, confirmed by the testimony of their parents, did we learn the particulars of the foregoing narrative. Many were the sketches which the enthusiastic artist made both of mother and children, while I, who could command the instrumentality of no material pencil, allowed their loveliness to engrave itself on my heart, to be represented by such colours of language as are at my disposal. Thus has the reader been introduced to Angelica and Teodulo, from whom we, with much satisfaction, learned that both Basillo and Firmino were married and prosperous; while Damiano continued a sullen bachelor. Such, upon honest and upright minds were the felicitous results of the PLAGUE-TREASURE.

MELROSE ABBEY.

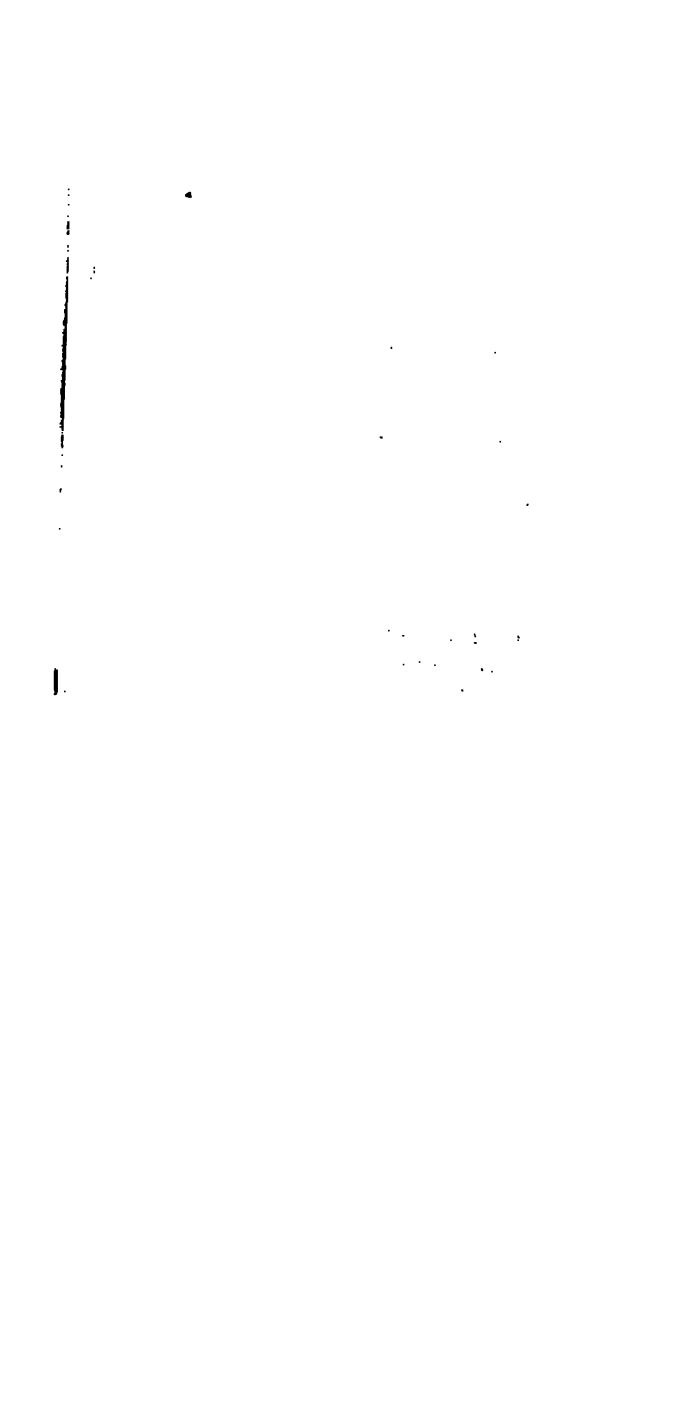
BY THOMAS MILLER,

AUTHOR OF "A DAY IN THE WOODS," "ROYSTON  
GOWER," "FAIR ROSAMOND," ETC.

PAUSE here awhile ! and on these ruins look,  
Worn with the footsteps of forgotten years ;  
Peruse this page in Time's black-lettered book ;  
Gaze long, and read how he his trophies rears.  
See how each shattered shrine and sculptured nook,  
The deep grey impress of his footmark bears.  
Who was it reared this ponderous pile of stone ?  
Ask Time ! he threw it down, and now reigns here  
alone.









Remains of the Cathedral of St. John

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ASTOR, LENOX AND  
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

View it when sunset through that arch doth stream,  
    Throwing a solemn splendour on the pile ;  
When the tall pillars flash back every beam,  
    And dusky crimson fills the vaulted aisle ;  
While the bowed roof of darker hue doth seem,  
    As if it frowned upon the mocking smile,  
That plays upon its ruins, grim and grey,  
And with its gloomy look would chase the light away.

Gaze on that oriel now, 'tis shorn of all  
    Its saintly forms, and gaudy colourings ;  
The deep blue tunic, and the purple pall,  
    The glowing gold that formed the vests of kings  
No longer flash at sunset on the wall ;  
    Gone are the chequered angels' rainbowed wings.  
The hollow wind alone blows bleakly there,  
And the cold moonlight comes through the broad blank  
    to stare.

Altar, and crucifix, are now o'erthrown,  
    The wild-brier waves where Mary Mother smiled ;  
And He whose sculptured agony had grown  
    Grim as the ruins round about Him piled,  
Rude hands have ages long ago hurled down ;  
    But Time has sanctified what man defiled :  
Though gone the Virgin's shrine, and thorn-crowned  
    brow,  
It ne'er more holy seemed, more meet for prayer than now.

See how the roof from clustering columns sprung,  
Like some high forest-walk embowered and lone ;  
No branch is there in wild disorder flung,  
But each arched bough has with its fellow grown,  
Looking as if, while they in beauty hung,  
Their growth was checked, and changed at once to stone ;  
The bundled stems of each low arm bereft,  
And their wide-spreading boughs forspanning arches left.

And from the ruined roof with fixèd frown,  
See the Enchanter's gaze who changed the scene,  
With stony eyes doomed to look ever down,  
(The corbells locked each springing arch between,)  
Waiting for Summer's green or Autumn's brown,  
The aching grey around once more to skreen :  
So fancy deemed did think those forms of stone,  
Which on the cold floor looked, and heard the wind's  
low moan.

Drooping between the oriel and the sky,  
Like a dark banner the green ivy waves ;  
Casting a shadow where the dead still lie,  
Or moving to and fro athwart their graves  
Like silent spectres, that seem gliding by,  
In noiseless motion when the tempest raves ;  
Chequering the tombs with many a varied light,  
The pale now sombered o'er, then dusk, or silver-  
bright.

There was a time when, mid those ruins grey,  
The pomp of Church and Chivalry were seen ;  
Amice and armour mingled there to pray ;  
And Beauty from the galleries did lean,  
(Watching the entrance of the long array,  
The abbot haught, and knight of austere mien,)  
Her drooping eyelids glancing down abashed,  
As some plumed warrior's gaze from the raised vizor  
flashed.

But they are gone—the dead that sleep below,  
Have left no record of their boasted deeds :  
That time-worn stone once bore what thou wouldst  
know,  
And could it speak would tell how moss and weeds  
Did o'er its frail and chiselled glory grow ;  
But now within nought save the blind-worm feeds :  
Where is the heart of Bruce ? look round and see :  
Perchance that nodding thistle, now doth answer thee.

No more their war-cry shakes the battle-field,  
Their trumpets “ wake the armèd throng ” no more ;  
The cold grey granite is their only shield ;  
The tide of war has died upon the shore :  
They who dealt death, to death themselves did yield :  
The worms fed on those iron men of yore.  
Look round and weep ! here's all that thou canst see,  
Of pomp, and pride, and power, and gorgeous chivalry .

'Tis on these mighty landmarks of the past,  
Where the heart rests and scarcely dares to beat;  
A silence falls upon us deep and vast :  
It seems a land where Life and Death do meet,  
And calmly on each other gaze at last ;  
Looking like friends amid that still retreat ;  
Still as Eternity with ruins crowned,  
Gazing on the mute world that's stretched in silence  
round.

Oh ! 'tis a spot where hidden thoughts will rise,  
Breaking like morning on the darkened soul ;  
Bringing again those bright and clouded skies,  
With feelings deep, that make the life-blood roll  
Like billows through the heart ; awakening sighs  
Which stern philosophy could ne'er control.—  
A spot to watch the melancholy waves  
Of Memory shoreward break, upon a land of graves.

## MY COUSIN AND THE CURATE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "REFORMER."

"I SHALL be bored to death—I shall be vapoured—I shall be blued if I stop a month in this place!" soliloquized Miss Percival, as the post-chaise which carried her entered a little quiet village in the West of England. "This is transportation with a vengeance! Not a sound but the blacksmith's hammer, and the chirruping of a few birds. Why I shall lose my most uncommon share of common sense—my wonderful portion of wondrous understanding in three weeks' time. If I am ever allowed to go home again,—by the bye, I think I shall run away—I shall make my first appearance in the character of an intellectual ghost—the mental skeleton—the phantasmagoria—the shadow of a shade. A pretty village they say!—very sweet! very retired! very rural! Yes. There's a row of little stupid houses!—up in the morning at five, and that's the school—babble—babble—babble. And some widow lady lives there, the relict



of a little corn-chandler or a miller. Ah! and that's the doctor's—always the best house in country places—Mr. Something, surgeon, on the large brass plate—and where's the use of a plate? as if every body did not know every body! Oh! and two or three shops, I declare! shops that sell every thing. And that pert-looking house with the green blinds and the green shutters is the attorney's—it rivals the doctor's ingenuity. And the village church peeping through the trees—an ivied tower—I hope the owls make themselves comfortable. What! and is the postilion turning down this dull lane?—not even the sight of a human face, or the sound of a human voice, or the print of a human footstep. I'll run away, I'm determined! Oh, now we stop, and this is my aunt's cottage, not a cottage ornée, not even a Swiss. Cave of dulness! I may as well despair at once; it will save me a great deal of trouble—and I see that hoping is hopeless."

So the young lady resigned herself, if not to despair, at least to ill temper; and as the post-boy drew up with his best attempt at style, she leaned back in the chaise, and looked as discontented and unamiable as possible. A very fair young girl, with rich glossy curls of auburn hair, had been watching her arrival from the windows, and now stood in the little rustic porch to receive her; but the visitor deigned not a glance until she was obliged, perforce, to alight; and then the cousins met with a cold clasp of the hand, instead of the warm embrace prompted by the heart of the young cottage girl.

Miss Percival, merely because she could not help it, suffered herself to be led into a sitting-room, where she was received by her aunt, Mrs. Moore. The elder lady looked exceedingly prim and stately ; the young one particularly irritated and unthankful, and Blanche Moore, like a little angel of peace, holding an olive branch between them.

" You are welcome, Miss," said the stately lady, and she seemed at first intending to present her cheek ; but Miss Percival's chilling aspect, acting like a north-easter, reduced the atmosphere of her kindness down below zero.

" Thank you, Ma'am," said Miss Percival ; and having touched her aunt's hand with the tip of the fore-finger of a lemon-coloured kid glove, she threw herself on the sofa, and then keeping true to her determination of being as disagreeable as possible, drew herself into an upright position.

" Have you travelled alone, Miss?" asked Mrs. Moore, whose ideas of propriety were somewhat scandalized by the appearance of such a proceeding.

" No, Ma'am, I am not considered fit to be trusted alone. My papa came with me until within the last ten miles, and then, as his time was precious, he put me into the chaise (he could not lock the door), and thought he would venture to leave me to chance—or my own discretion—but to chance I suppose—nobody thinks I have any discretion."

" Discretion, Miss," replied the aunt with an air of

great dignity, "is a most desirable quality for all ages, and for all classes."

"Perhaps so, Ma'am, but not having any, I am not able to judge."

Mrs. Moore looked aghast; but while she was framing a reproof, Blanche again interposed.

"I am sure my cousin must feel fatigued," she said; "will you suffer me to show you to your room?"

"I am not fatigued," replied Miss Percival, resolving not to have that excuse for her ill-temper. "I have only travelled twenty miles this morning."

"Did you not find the country very beautiful?" asked Blanche, thinking, in her simplicity, that nobody could look on the fair face of nature with a frown—"did you not find the country very beautiful?"

"No," said Miss Percival, "I don't like the country."

"Not like the country!" exclaimed Blanche, to whom the expression of such an opinion seemed perfect heresy. "Ah! you are indisposed. Things have vexed you. You have not used your eyes. You have not asked your heart. But I know that you do like it. I am sure of it. I know you better than you know yourself. And our village—is it not sweet—placid—retired?"

"As to its sweetness," replied the town lady, "I suppose I cannot form an opinion, as it is too retired for me yet to have seen it."

"Not seen it!" exclaimed Blanche. "Why, cousin, you drove through it!"

"Did I?" said Miss Percival; "you surprise me. What; do you call those few little houses that I passed, the village?"

"Indeed it is considered a very lovely place," replied Blanche.

"May be so, but *I* have no taste; and indeed I must be mistaken, for I only saw a few miserable houses—huts—cottages, and one or two chandlers' shops."

"Chandlers' shops!" exclaimed Mrs. Moore.

"And the church!" cried Blanche, "the prettiest church, with its old-fashioned porch, and its turret all over ivy!"

"I believe I did see something of a rookery," said Miss Percival.

"My dear cousin," said Blanche, "you are labouring under an optical delusion; your eyes are jaundiced."

"If my complexion is safe—" said Miss Percival.

"That is brilliant enough," replied Blanche, "but lest we should impair it by tiring you, let me lead you to your chamber."

"As you please," replied Miss Percival, too indifferent to show any interest in the matter; and Blanche, hoping that retirement might soften her cousin's heart, conducted her to a chamber, the very epitome of comfort and purity. A bed with drapery as unsullied as Alpine snows, and a casement, over which the sprays and blossoms of the eglantine were twining and wreathing and breathing sweetness. And here Miss Percival sat down in sullen dignity;

and to a remark of her cousin's on the beauty of the prospect from the window, said sullenly, "It might be so—she did not know—but the room was very small."

Blanche's gentle and affectionate blandishments were all lost on her cousin, or it might be that they were counteracted by the well-meant but rather injudicious admonitions of Mrs. Moore. The town lady kept up her sullenness and her dignity. She never uttered a sentiment that Mrs. Moore did not think it her duty to endeavour to correct, and her reproofs and advice were received with supercilious scorn or unveiled contradiction. The utmost that Blanche could manage, with all the finessing of a kind nature, was to keep these belligerent powers in a state of armed neutrality.

Miss Percival kept her chamber in the morning: she did not condescend to make her appearance below until the hour of dinner, and then, much to the shock of Mrs. Moore's nerves, she descended in her dressing-gown.

Miss Percival did not choose to see Mrs. Moore's stare of horror as she fixed her eyes upon the loose wrapper; so that lady was obliged to put her chagrin into words.

"I am very sorry to see that you are ill, niece Ellen," said the country lady, with unutterable dignity.

"I am not ill, thank you, Ma'am," said Miss Percival.

"I imagined so from your dress, niece," said the elder lady.

Miss Percival did not condescend to reply ; she cast a look down on her own attire, as if to see what she really had on, and then, as though the matter were either no concern of hers, or quite unworthy of her notice, remained silent.

" Perhaps it is not the fashion in town for ladies to dress for dinner?" said Mrs. Moore, with much asperity.

" Yes, Ma'am," said Miss Percival, " we dress for dinner, but we dine at a rational hour."

" And what do you call a rational hour, Miss?"

" Six."

" But I should have supposed that you would have dressed, let the hour be what it might,—at least out of respect to your friends."

" I do dress when there is occasion."

Mrs. Moore bridled up. " And when may you consider that there is occasion?"

" When there are gentlemen, Ma'am."

Mrs. Moore lifted up her eyes at this contumaciousness. " Then, not for common courtesy! not for the habits of a lady! not out of respect to your associates!"

" I never dress to please myself."

" Nor your friends?"

" Not my female friends; it would not please them. Women are never so particularly gratified at seeing women look well."

Again Mrs. Moore lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven in a deprecatory appeal.

“And you really acknowledge—you acknowledge that you dress to please the gentlemen?”

Miss Percival smiled again with an appearance of malicious pleasure at the discomposure of her aunt, and then said:

“Yes, I rather pique myself upon my candour—I do dress to please the gentlemen.”

“Well, niece, I must say that I do pity my poor brother! Ah! what trouble and anxiety a thoughtless daughter must be!”

“I am sure,” interposed Blanche, “that my cousin has no serious meaning in her words; she only speaks at random. Do, dear Ellen, adapt yourself a little to us.”

“Speaks at random!” cried Mrs. Moore; “Yes, and acts at random, too! I do not mean to reproach you, niece; I never reproach any body; but I must say, that I am sorry for the occasion of your visit to us. If you had not been giving very improper encouragement to a man of very doubtful character, your poor papa would not have felt himself obliged to send you into the country to get you out of the way.”

“Where, it seems, I am most grievously *in* the way,” said Miss Percival; “and a most unnecessary measure it was. I know my own condition in life too well to risk its advantages by any girlish folly. I may amuse myself with insignificant and inconsiderable people; but papa ought to know me better than to suppose I should ever do it at the price of forfeiting all *my* expectations.”

"There, Mamma," cried Blanche; "I told you always that Ellen meant nothing: it is only her way,—she jests."

"I must believe my brother," said the elder lady.

"Believe what you please, Ma'am," said Miss Percival, "but can you for a moment suppose that I would now be spending my time under your roof if I had chosen to have spent it elsewhere? I give the best proof of my discretion by preserving it at any price."

Mrs. Moore lifted up her eyes in horror, and opened her mouth in indignation; but Blanche interposed, and procured a cessation of arms again.

For ten whole days Miss Percival kept up her sullen discontent. She never allowed herself to be pleased with any thing. She found neither brightness in the sun, nor sweetness in the flowers. The garden might have been a wilderness; the green fields a desert; the rose a nettle; and the fair stately lily a whisp of withered straw, for any difference that it made to Miss Percival. It was in vain that Blanche descanted on loveable mornings, and delicious evenings, and painted beautiful prospects, and dilated on delicious scenery; for ten whole days Miss Percival preferred her ill-humour to all that a Deity had delighted to lavish on this earth to adorn the dwelling-place of his creatures. Infinite was Mrs. Moore's chagrin—excessive Blanche's regret; but the more they were expressed, the more did they strengthen the young lady's resolution, being in fact the reward of all her self-denial. Mornings of



sullen discontent spent in her own room,—dinner in her dressing-gown,—unlimited scorn of every thing, the narrow limits of the house, the style of living, even the very viands of the table, but most of all, of every sentiment and opinion uttered by her aunt,—these made up the sum of Miss Percival's amiability.

"Dear Ellen," said Blanche to her one day, almost in tears, "I beseech you, abandon this cruel unkindness; think how unhappy you make us. Do lay aside this perverseness, and make your visit a pleasure to us all."

"I am sorry my visit should be unpleasant to you," said Ellen; "but have the goodness to remember that it is my misfortune, not my fault—it was paid on compulsion."

Blanche burst into tears, and left the room.

She returned after a short absence, trying to look cheerful.

"Ellen, you said, the other day, that you liked the society of gentlemen; we have one below at this moment—come, and let us introduce you."

"Or him?—which?" asked Miss Percival.

"Of course—I beg your pardon; only, as he is our clergyman—"

"Oh! a clergyman is he? I hate preaching."

"He will not preach. You will find him very delightful."

"After having heard the catalogue of all my sins. No, thank you: I suppose he thinks me a heathen, or something worse. There, you need not look so miser-

able: go and enjoy his society yourself. I dare say, to you he may be delightful—delectable!”

“I am sure even you would like him.”

“My taste may be so far vitiated by ten days’ imprisonment in the country, that I probably might; but as I wish to preserve it as uncontaminated as possible, it is better for me to keep in my solitude.”

Blanche went away, more in sorrow than in anger.

We are rather at a loss to tell, whether it was curiosity, or the very great difficulty of doing nothing, that induced Miss Percival to walk to her window and watch the clergyman’s departure. Whatever was the motive, she saw, with infinite astonishment, that, instead of a venerable priest with hoary hair, such as she had foolishly imagined, there passed out a young man of fine stature, and even elegant demeanour. At that moment Miss Percival began to repent of her ill-humour.

Now we presume not to tell, or even to guess, what might be the cause of Miss Percival’s change of temperament; whether the sight of the young clergyman had produced a talismanic effect, tantamount to a good sermon, or whether it sprang solely from her being thoroughly tired out with her own ill-temper, we know not, but whatever it might be, she astonished her relations by coming down, on the following morning, all ready equipped to accompany them to church.

Who that has ever felt the enthrallment of but a brief

confinement, knows not how the emancipated spirit bounds and luxuriates in the open face of day, inhaling the free air almost to intoxication ; and seeming as if the immensity of the universe were all too small for its excursions ? In spite of herself, Miss Percival felt something like the treasure of the slave's recovered freedom, almost forgot her ill-temper in the balmy air, the bright sunshine, the Sabbath garb of nature, and the fragrant breath of June. Rustic groups were hastening to the quiet village sanctuary, and the spirits of gladness and of peace seemed to preside as the tutelars of the place.

We know of nothing more tranquillizing, more peaceful, more soothing, more composing, than the service of the Sabbath in a village church : the place sanctified by the ashes of the dead, as well as by the prayers of the living ; the place that had so often listened in its solemn stillness to the vow that bound heart to heart ; the place where the first-born has been dedicated to the Deity, and which has echoed the sobs of the funereal train ; a place hallowed by the gladdest and the saddest of all human emotions, as well as by all holy rites, and seeming itself to breathe a sacramental power ; and where the balminess of summer pervades the place, throwing sunshine over all ; and group after group comes clustering in, redolent of health and bloom ; and we catch from without glimpses of the trees, waving their green garments in gladness, and rustling in their beauty and their strength, and feel the breath of the sweet flowers, and catch glances of the blue sky ;—

we say that these things find an answer in the inmost depths of the heart.

Mrs. Moore preceded her niece and daughter into a pew, with old-fashioned carved panels, and cushions of faded red cloth. Fortunately for Miss Percival, it happened to be immediately below the pulpit and reading-desk, so not being inclined for any better occupation of her thoughts, she had ample time to satisfy her curiosity.

The officiating clergyman came. A glance sufficed to convince Miss Percival it was the same of whom she had caught a glimpse at her aunt's garden-gate. Now we are quite sure that neither foppery nor fashion ever invented a garb one half so simply dignified and graceful as the surplice and cassock of the church. The young priest came in his flowing garments, as pure as unsunned snow. He would have made a fine picture in his cloud of white drapery ; the masses of his light hair glittering in the sunlight like a glory over a brow high and imaginative ; and eyes, in whose depths there slept a world of poetry, and it might be, passion.

At the close of that morning's service, Miss Percival rose as from a dream, disturbed by the simultaneous movement of the congregation. The most melodious of voices had ceased to speak ; and though she had not caught the sense of a single sentence, the deep rich tenderness of its tones, had lulled her like a strain of music, into a soft and dreamy forgetfulness.

" Well, niece Ellen," said Mrs. Moore, as they

wound their way home, "how do you like our clergyman?"

Now, had Ellen answered from her heart, she would have said, "He is divine!" But answering from her art, she said, "He is very passable, Ma'am."

"Passable!" exclaimed Mrs. Moore. "Passable! Why, Miss, he is considered a very extraordinary young man."

"Is he, Ma'am?"

"Yes, indeed he is, Miss; but you are determined not to like anything amongst us."

"Indeed, Ma'am," said Miss Percival, in the most amiable tone in which she had spoken since she had opened her ruby lips in the country atmosphere; "I feel that I must like every thing at last. Make a little allowance for the harassed mind with which I came amongst you."

"There, Mamma!" cried Blanche, triumphantly; "I knew that Ellen was harassed and ill."

"Perhaps," said Ellen, "the perturbation of my mind might infect my body. At all events, I hope the evil influence is passing away."

"There are the '*huts*' which you passed in coming, niece," said Mrs. Moore significantly.

"And now they seem to me very pretty cottages," said Ellen.

"But you do not like the country, you know."

"To-day it seems to me very beautiful; and indeed, my dear aunt, I have made up my mind to like every thing."



"And our dear Mr. Engelman into the bargain?" asked Blanche with a happy smile.

"Oh, of course," replied Ellen with another smile, the first which had brightened her countenance; and in fact, from that moment, Ellen Percival became perfectly amiable. Her companions could scarcely believe in her identity. They never saw the colour of her dressing gown again; and she not only ate her dinners without sending her plate away at the third mouthful, but actually praised every dish that came to table.

"We may thank our dear Mr. Engelman for this change," said Mrs. Moore; and she was so far right that Mr. Engelman ought certainly to have been thanked, if not his sermon.

As if to indemnify herself for her late seclusion, nothing now would satisfy Ellen but exploring every lane and nook and dingle. She made Blanche show her every point of landscape, within walking limits, that was considered beautiful; but her attention was most of all attracted to the parsonage, an old-fashioned, heavy house, not particularly pleasing in itself, and built before fine prospects were in fashion. Of course there is no accounting for taste; therefore we cannot tell why Ellen so much admired the old cumbrous building; but she must have been wonderfully stricken with its beauties, as in whatever direction their walks began, they were sure to terminate by some circuitous route in a progress past the parsonage. Once or twice they had seen the young clergyman enter his garden-gate.

but when they themselves were at a most provoking distance.

Miss Percival's ill temper was in so much danger of returning, that when Mrs. Moore asked her one morning if she would like to accompany Blanche on a little errand of charity, she had very nearly said, no—she did not like cottages, or sick people—and some thought of her dressing-gown passed again across her mind ; but certain reminiscences of the bright hair and the swimming eyes of the young clergyman induced her to postpone the indulgence of her meditated unamiableness, and she went with Blanche to the cottage, and there, as if to reward her magnanimity, sat the identical young clergyman by the pillow of the sick and sorrowful woman, speaking of hope and peace in a voice that sounded like the breathings of music.

Miss Percival's face flushed with anticipated triumph. She was at once the most benign of human beings. She smoothed the pillow of the sick woman with the whitest of white hands, spoke cheerily, and busied herself in devising a hundred little comforts for her ; while Blanche, entirely obscured, hung back pale and sad ; and the young clergyman followed her gestures, and gazed upon her face with eyes of undisguised and fascinated admiration.

Mr. Engelman accompanied the cousins home. He walked by Ellen's side, and listened to her honeyed speech, and thought that the fair face of nature looked fairer still as she descanted on its loveliness :—the verdure was all hopefulness, the sky all sunniness, the

fields all gladness, the chirruping of the birds and humming of the insects, seemed rising as a hymn to the Deity. From that hour Miss Percival had no more occasion to take walks round by the parsonage house. Wherever she went, by a strange coincidence, she was sure to meet Mr. Engelman. It was quite wonderful what a parity there seemed to exist in their tastes, for if Miss Percival mentioned a fine prospect which she intended to see again, it always happened that Mr. Engelman had a similar curiosity, and thus it followed as a thing of course, that they admired it together.

At first Blanche was of these parties; but just at this time her health began to fail her; she grew very pale and thin, and seemed constantly trying not to look miserable: and as she lost her strength, and could not accomplish long walks, Miss Percival was frequently obliged to commence her rambles alone, although she seldom finished them so.

And of what were the dreams of the young clergyman? Even of the brilliant pictures of his imagination, the poetry of his soul, the passions of his heart. Heart, and soul, and imagination! ye seem as if not of this world—not of our fallen state, but relics of a loftier birthright. Your portraiture seems rather the outlines of the bright things of another existence, a higher state of being; and yet we foolishly and vainly seek to find the perfect resemblance in this.

With all the vivid temperature of a poet, and a soul for which the world was all too small, Mr. Engelman



found himself pent up within the narrow confines of a village; piety and poetry his sole companions, and often did the one find utterance in the other.

Thus, then, imaginative and unsuspecting, the heart of the young clergyman was dangerously open to the impressions of art and beauty, and Ellen Percival, eminently gifted in both, found the one supported by the other, as successful as her vanity could wish.

And so the young clergyman wrote sonnets to the moon and all the stars, but most particularly to Ellen's eyes; and sometimes, forgetting his high mission, his sermons would break into passionate floods of poetry that brought flushes of triumph into Ellen's cheeks, and tears into Blanche's eyes.

And thus passed the term of Ellen's visit; but as all things have an end, at last, a letter came to summon her home again, to tell her that Mr. Percival would be with her on the following day, to reconduct her from her banishment, and to hope that the term of her transportation had effectually cured her of any tendency to give improper encouragement to improper admirers.

With a scornful laugh, Ellen threw the honoured missive to Blanche, who, with the utmost simplicity and a slight touch of pique, said, "*That*, I am sure might have been spared! We could have no unsuitable or improper visitors here."

"Really, Blanche, that was very simply said;" remarked Ellen, with an air of immeasurable superiority in worldly wisdom.

"Was it?" said Blanche, "I do not see how: I am

sure mamma would never introduce you into any society where an improper admirer might be found."

"What say you to Mr. Engelman?" asked Ellen.

"Mr. Engelman!" exclaimed Blanche, with a vivid blush, whether of indignation for the insult to her village pastor or from some other feeling; "Mr. Engelman would confer honour if he admired a princess!"

"My dear simple silly cousin, this is your country breeding; but you judge differently from my papa. Now tell me what you suppose the sum total of Mr. Engelman's income may amount to?"

"I don't know what that has to do with the matter," replied Blanche; "but as I happen to be acquainted with the sum, and you may have a motive for asking,"—and Blanche sighed—"I suppose I ought to tell you. Mr. Engelman has a hundred a-year and the use of the parsonage; you know he is only a curate."

"I wish he had been a bishop," said Ellen, "and then I might have thought of him."

"And do you not think of him?" asked Blanche.

"Oh, yes, much—often. He has been very delightful amusement—very delightful country amusement; so poetical, so elegant, so handsome. If he were in some West-end chapel in town, he would be quite the fashion. But do you know, cousin Blanche, he is precisely of that class that papa would call improper admirers."

Poor Blanche's head was puzzled. "I don't understand you. Why?"

"Because he has only a hundred a-year, as you say?"

"Oh Ellen!" exclaimed Blanche.

"And what does '*Oh Ellen*' mean?"

"I am very sorry for you!" said Blanche.

"And why?" asked Ellen.

"Because I am afraid that your heart will lead you away from your duty."

"My heart is in very good leading-strings," said Ellen; "and just to let you see how little I deserve papa's doubts, I assure you that I shall go home to-morrow quite prudent."

Blanche did not seem to understand.

"That is," continued Ellen, "I shall never suffer my heart to be entangled under two or three thousand a-year. I could not live upon less. Papa has nothing to give us; he is living up to his income; so, till I get my two or three thousand a-year, I only amuse myself."

"Oh, poor Mr. Engelman!" exclaimed Blanche, "who or what will console you?"

"*You!*" said Ellen.

\* \* \* \*

"And I lose you!" exclaimed the young village priest, "and the charm of life goes with you!"

Ellen cast down the finest eyes in the world.

"But tell me!" he exclaimed, "tell me—I am not without hopes of entering on a wider field of exertion, one that may place me in circumstances more worthy of you; and then,—then,—speak to me, tell me, what have I to hope?"

“Wait till the time comes,” said Ellen.

“Thank you! thank you! kind — generous — condescending!”

And so they parted. Ellen returned to town, and entered with renewed avidity into its occupations and its pleasures; and the young clergyman spent his days in invocations to her name, giving but a divided heart to the duties of his sacred office, treading over again her footsteps, murmuring to his own ear in solitude the syllables of her name; and only visiting Mrs. Moore for the pleasure of hearing her spoken of, and in the vague hope of learning all that befel her.

And thus three months passed away, when one morning, radiant with hope, the young priest went to Mrs. Moore’s cottage, to tell her that his rector had sanctioned his journey to town; that great hopes were held out to him of a comfortable living, and that he went on the morrow.

“And all this pleasure on the possibility of leaving us!” thought Blanche, and the faintness of her heart came over her countenance; but Mr. Engelman was blind and dizzy with his own happiness, and he went away wholly unconscious that he had been in the atmosphere of a sorrowful spirit.

Contrary to the usual tide of human circumstances, every thing wore an aspect favourable to Mr. Engelman’s wishes. He was very kindly received by his rector, who held a living at the West-end of the town, as well as that in the country, notwithstanding all that has been said, and justly said, about pluralities. It was here that he resided, and here that he offered the

young curate a home, promising him the exertion of an interest by no means inconsiderable in promoting his plans. Full of hope and ardour, Mr. Engelman presented himself before the nobleman on whom his hopes depended, and was received with much grace and favour. As far as blind mortality might see, the prospects of his life were bright and unclouded.

“ I will not present myself before her,” said the young clergyman, “ until I am certified of this matter ; until I can go to her and say, Here are the comforts of life, make them blest by accepting them. It is far too little for your deserts, but your soul is above the littleness of earthly splendour. No, I will not go to her till I can say this, and to-morrow—ah ! perhaps, to-morrow ! ”

To-morrow ! ah ! is not the promise of to-morrow made to be the hope and the solace of to-day ?

Well, the to-morrow of that day came. The young priest went to the peer by his appointment, and with a tide of gladness through his heart, that sent its rush into his cheeks, received his nomination.

Dizzy with delight, and with a heart full even to overflowing with its own rapture, its own treasure of happiness, Mr. Engelman rushed back again to his temporary home, to tell his reverend friend of his good fortune.

“ My dear, good Engelman, I am rejoiced,—delighted. But I must congratulate you another time, for I am quite feverish with impatience. I want somebody to do a little duty for me at the church, for I was seized with the gout in the night, and am unable to

move this morning. I have sent to every neighbouring brother, but not one could be found, and you are my last resort. You must go to the church and marry a couple for me. My dear fellow, don't speak—run! fly! It wants but a quarter to twelve. Yes! I know that you wish to tell me all about it; but, my dear fellow, you must postpone it. Now do go! I have the license, it is all quite regular, quite right, now fly!”

And so, though almost dying at the delay, Mr. Engelman went at his utmost speed to the parish church. There stood three carriages-and-four with white horses and satin and silver favours, and postillions with blue satin jackets, and curiosity had gathered round them a mass of people, through which the young clergyman could scarcely penetrate: he did so at last. The moments were becoming every instant more precious. The clerk had most considerably put the clock ten minutes back, and there he was standing with the white surplice in his hands ready to throw over the young priest's shoulders, and as he entered the vestry at one door, the bridal group passed into the body of the church through another, and he just caught a glimpse of a vast quantity of rustling white satin, and the wavings of white feathers, and the trembling of orange blossoms, and the undulations of French blond, as the bridesmaids clustered round the bride; and in a moment more his own white garments were wrapped round him, and followed by the clerk, he passed more hastily down the other aisle, and just at the altar steps the *two parties met*.

For the last six months of Engelman's life he had been living on hopes and dreams: he had been gradually losing sight of his high embassy, and shaping to himself a heaven out of the brilliant picturings of his own imaginings. He came into that church flushed with triumph and expectancy—his cheek was bright, and his eye lustrous, and his heart high in hope; but it was all in the pursuit and the desire of a paradise of unpromised bliss, and so—

The eye of the young priest ran over the bridal party; first on the bridegroom: the sallow jaundiced complexion would have moved his pity had it not been joined to a certain vulgar arrogance, the bane of every kind emotion. "What woman's heart could love you?" thought the clergyman, and he turned to look on her who was about to vow away her heart and all its affections. He caught a glimpse through blonds and bows and blossoms; his own cheek grew pale, and was long, long ere it brightened again—another, it confirmed the certainty—yes, the bride, in her rich attire and her splendid trappings, was the idol of his own soul—Ellen Percival!

Engelman staggered to the altar. He knelt down—he buried his own blanched features in the white drapery of his garment, and who shall tell the world of thought, of passion, of self-communing that passed through the depths of his scathed soul? The cells of memory gave up the imprisoned past—he knew that he had burnt unholy fires upon the altar of God—that he, the vowed servant of the Deity, had,

traitor-like, sworn homage to another sovereign. A whirlwind passed over his soul, and after the whirlwind, the still small voice that gradually broke into mental prayer ; and after a time that seemed interminable to his audience, but which was incalculably short for the thoughts and feelings crowded within it, the priest rose and turned his face towards the bridal group.

That face was perfectly colourless, and in his white robe he looked more like a piece of faultless sculpture than a living denizen of this world. Miss Percival glanced towards him a look of shamed contrition, but no shade of recognition met her eye, and as she turned that bright and lustrous orb on him she was about to swear to love and honour, it lit up with such an expression of illimitable scorn in anticipatory violation of the unbreathed vows.

Once more had the minister of the Most High assumed the dignity of his embassy. No longer the impassioned lover, but again the humble servant of his Master, with his own lips he gave the idol of his soul unto another: no tremor broke the harmony of his rich voice, nor did his hand tremble as he gave the little circlet of gold which bound her as with gyves and manacles.

The bride left the church and received the congratulations of all her friends and relations—of those who loved and those who hated her. She had made a most excellent match, but she loathed her finery, her splendour, her lord, and most of all, herself.



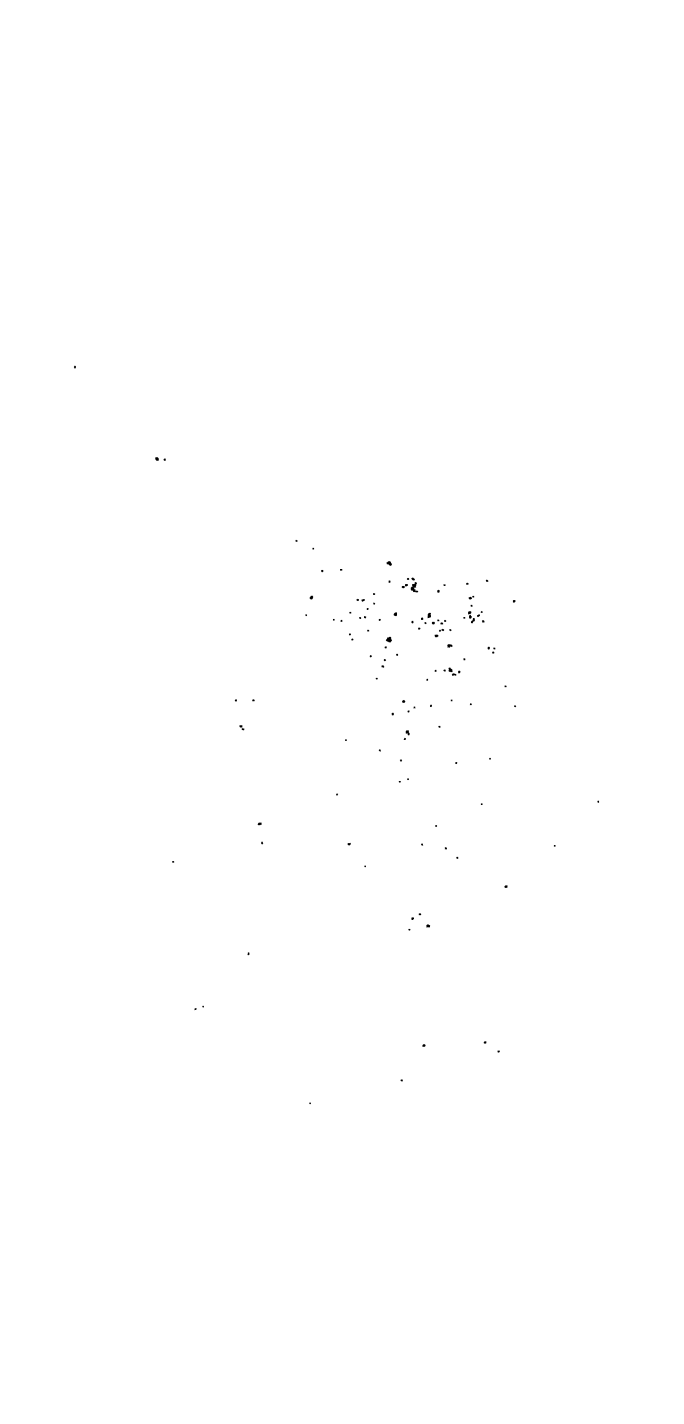
The young priest left that church humble, stricken, contrite : he had revowed himself his Master's servant. He made no complaint. He did not tell the history of his heart even to his nearest friend. Everybody thought that the town air did not agree with him, and he was recommended to return to his country curacy for a little time, until his health was re-established ; and he did return, anxious not to give up his stewardship until he could render a more faithful reckoning. Poetry for a while was laid aside, and in the soberness of honest zeal, he preached to the sinner, comforted the sorrowful, and visited the sick.

We said that he visited the sick and comforted the sorrowful. Ah ! then he visited poor Blanche Moore, for she was both sick and sorrowful. Yes, he visited her, and those visits were comforts ; and gradually a sort of wakening memory brought strange perceptions to his mind, and he remembered how poor Blanche had faded as his own blind idolatry had fastened link to link of the chain which bound him ; and now, when he looked upon her, fair and fragile as a flower, and seeming as if a rude breath would destroy her, he asked himself if he were wholly innocent of her unhappiness, and the thought made his voice grow softer when he spoke to her, and his words kinder, and the palest tint of the wild rose once more blossomed on Blanche's cheek, and as he felt the pleasure of bestowing happiness, he began, in the same proportion, to enjoy it too—and so, to shorten a long story—finally, they were happy together.

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## THE GIRL OF BULGARIA.


It was a brilliant evening in 1833, in the month of April, a month which in the fine climate of the country south of the Danube covers the landscape with all the richness of summer vegetation. The Danube generally, in the lower part of its course, flows through a flat country; but there are, from time to time, little promontories and projecting points of land extremely beautiful, and commanding extensive ranges of this great historic river, and of the noble country which spreads to the mountain ridge, sheltering the plains of Adrianople. On those the peasants naturally fix, for the purpose of erecting their cottages beyond the reach of the winter floods, as well as for the delight of the scene. A small but remarkably picturesque knoll of this kind had been purchased a few years before by a Greek family, which the troubles of the Morea had driven thus far to look for peace. Chrysopulo Palari, the father of the household, a Greek officer of distinction, who taking a part in the first attempt under Ypsilanti, and involved in the failure of that gallant revolt, escaped from the hands of the Turks, and settled in the obscurity of Bulgaria.

But his quiet was now likely to be disturbed, for the Russian campaign against the Sultan had commenced. Diebitsch, with fifty thousand of the Imperial troops, had crossed the Danube, within sight of his house, but a few days before ; and the marauders, who follow all armies, had already begun to plunder.

The occupations of the females in those countries are still not unlike those of their ancestors in the days of the Iliad. The well, the bath, and spinning, employ all their leisure hours ; and few sights can be prettier than a circle of the peasant girls, with their hair almost classically wreathed, and their spindles all busy together, sitting in an evening sun, and listening to some one of their number, who performs the part, sometimes of tale-teller, and sometimes of minstrel.

On this evening the daughter of Chrysopulo was the performer, on a pearl-studded, gem-inlaid Turkish lute, which had travelled as far as herself ; and which, in all the anxieties of flight, her father had brought with him, as almost the last relic of his former luxuries. The words which she sang to one of the country airs were probably the suggestion of the moment—an address to the Danube, calmly sweeping on before her, like a sheet of purple and gold.

Six thousand years are past and gone,  
Yet still thy mighty stream rolls on.  
Helmet and banner, crown and mail,  
Are buried in thy waters pale.  
Beside thee empires were undone ;  
What is't to thee ? Thy flood rolls on.



Earth's noblest hosts have filled thy strand ;  
Now silent all—all surge and sand.  
Byzantium ! Rome ! your tale is told,  
Here sleep your brilliant and your bold.  
Thou from the Goth his sword hast won.  
What is't to thee ? Thy flood rolls on.

Still War shall sweep, and Death shall tame,  
And still thou'rt mighty, and the same.  
The Russ shall thunder on thy shore,  
The Turk shall swell thee with his gore ;  
Again ; thou shalt be left alone.  
What is't to thee ? Thy flood rolls on.

And what is Earth, but like thy tide ?  
Where slumber beauty, love, and pride ?  
All light above ; all death below ;  
Joy to the eye ; the bosom woe.  
Then soon shall sleep a weary one !  
What is't to thee ? Thy flood rolls on.

The singular melancholy of the tone in which the closing lines of this little effusion were sung, raised the eyes of all her companions to the singer's countenance ; it still glistened with many a tear, but all inquiries were stopped by the sound of galloping. The dread of marauders instantly sent the whole group flying, like fawns, into the cottage ; with one exception, Castalie, the daughter of Chrysopulo. Their fears, however, were premature, for in another moment the high cap and brown visage of a Tartar courier were seen speeding round the foot of the knoll. The hospitality of the cottage was well known to the wayfarers on the road from Adrianople ; and Oglou, the Tartar, had often enjoyed a draught of that rich country wine, which, however perilous to him as a Mus-



sulman, he found remarkably pleasing to him as a man. Castalie flew towards him as he led his wearied horse up the steep, and eagerly inquired, whether he had brought a letter from the camp of the Vizier?

"Letters, my *hour*!" answered the grinning Tartar, "a thousand. Why, what do you think is in this saddle?" It was strapped over with a pair of enormous bags. "By my grandfather's beard! I never had so heavy a pack before; though I have carried half the love-letters of the harem, the wit of the coffee-houses, and the brains of the divan, in my time. But, rose of beauty, what can *you* want with a letter?"

"If you have not brought me *that* letter, I shall die. Oglou, remember the piastres I gave you, to bring me back an answer. For the sake of your mother's grave, look over your baggage. It is *impossible*, that Iskander could have let you come back without an answer; but," and she gave a sudden start, "he is dead! Iskander has fallen in battle, and Castalie has but to follow him—he is dead!"

"Daughter of paradise!" said the licensed humorist, still busy with loosening the burthens of his panting horse;—if this animal were to hear you asking such questions, he would tell the noble Chrysopulo; and your only chance of escape, as it is, is to bribe him by an excellent feed of barley-bread, and a vessel of water, as pure as your own sweet face, though a little cooler; if you will so far condescend."

"But Iskander! Iskander! Tell me," said the lovely creature, wringing her hands, and already wrought

up to an excess of terror—"Oh, but tell me how he died!"

"How the Capitano died! Why, shot through the heart with a handful of grapes and biscuits: and I am terribly afraid, mortally wounded by a huge bottle of Maresquino de Zara, which I observed at his head, after which he lay down and spake no more. But, now that I see the sunshine breaking again on your countenance, I think I recollect that—just before he shut his eyes upon this world, he gave me a fragment of paper, and, by Allah! here it is." The Tartar took the precious billet from a packet, where he had evidently preserved it with peculiar care, and unfolding the little silk wrapper in which it was delicately protected, held it to the delighted girl.

The Tartar of the Ottomans is a person of no small importance. He is a man of many offices, but not one of them a sinecure: he is the bear-leader of the crowd of English who wander over a thousand miles of the most savage country of Europe to see its most savage city, and be laughed at—even the ruined Stamboul itself! who leave England to see how they can best catch the perpetual pestilence that devours the Turkish rabble by thousands a-week, or a-day; and get nothing for their pilgrimage but the lightening of their purses. The Tartar, too, is the postmaster-general, and fills in his single person, or only in partnership with his horse, all the departments which fill so large a space in European capitals. He is also the grand bearer of reports and rumours, facts and fictions, throughout the

length and breadth of the sultan's sovereignty. He is thus the living newspaper, the peregrinating broadsheet, the "Times" on horseback; the delight, terror, wonder, and wish of the whole population that lives, smokes, and trembles, from the Tigris to the Danube.

Chrysopulo had now come out to meet his old acquaintance. "What news, Oglou, from Stamboul?"

"Nothing," was the answer. "Things go on as usual. The pasha of Damascus has been beheaded, on the accusation of the pasha of Bagdad; but fair justice has been done, for the pasha of Bagdad has been bow-stringed, and both their heads are now looking at each other over the seraglio-gate."

"Nothing from the army yet, I suppose," said Chrysopulo, who did not desire to exhibit, even to the Tartar, his anxiety on this most anxious of all topics to the Greek.

"Nothing. If the sultan shall speak the word, the Muscovites will be blown into the air. But his highness lets them play their tricks, just as he lets his monkeys play in the garden of the harem;—when he gets tired of looking at the unclean animals, he orders them to be whipped back into their cages."

"Of course," said Chrysopulo, with a smile; "and yet the Muscovite has cannon and cavalry to some amount, as we know to our cost, by their trampling down our young crops for leagues; his gun-boats, for the last fortnight, have been ferrying the yellow-beards over the Danube."

The Tartar had by this time swallowed a bottle of

the best of last year's vintage, and was in excellent vein for talking politics. "Friend Chrysopulo," whispered he, "I am by no means of opinion that matters are going on well in Stamboul itself. The vizier drinks claret, the divan drinks brandy, and the sultan drinks champagne. How can an empire stand, when there is not a soul in its government that can stand? At this moment, I would wager my bags and my beard, that there is not a man in the seraglio, from the effendi, that watches the pigeons in the poultry-yard, to the kislar aga, that keeps the sultanas in order, and from him up to the padishah, the mighty Mahmoud himself, who is not thinking a great deal more of French wine than Russian cannon; and who is not much more likely to gain a red nose than a battle.—But our flask is out; one cup more, to your health, and I must flog hard to catch the sun before he goes down on the old walls of Belgrade."

The one cup more was filled out and finished. The horse was mounted, and Oglou, pretty much in the same kind of steadiness in which he conjectured the sublime porte to be; flourished his lash, and was soon seen sinking into the twilight, that had already begun to throw its long line of purple over the shores of the river.

Castalie's letter was read over and over again, before she could find any thing in it, but that strange and dazzling rapture in which young hearts speak of thoughts which words were never meant to speak. Love is a vision, and all its language is visionary; all is sight, nothing is description. The mind lives,

like the dreamer, in a whirl of shapes and sounds, images and feelings, which sweep it wherever they will. Time, space, existence, all are mingled in one rich confusion. We might as well describe a dream when we awake. But, who ever listened to the description of a dream without ridicule, or who ever could listen to it with comprehension? Thus the tale of lovers, told again, seems either trifling or mad; that is folly in the ear, and perplexity in the tongue, which is supreme wisdom in the heart; like what the Moslem tell us of the language of Paradise, sweeter than ten thousand flutes to those who understand it, but wild and strange to the children of men.

At length the letter—after being perused, hidden in the bosom, and brought out to be perused and hidden again; was laid on the pillow where the fondest heart and fairest face in the province prepared to rest from a day of perturbation. But the moon, rising in southern splendour from the Euxine, threw such a blaze through the myrtles and hyacinths covering the chamber-window, that Castalie thought of studying her letter again. She took it to the casement, and in the act of unfolding it, saw a fragment of paper flutter to the ground. How it had escaped her before, she could not conceive. But, whether fixed in the folds, or dropt at the moment by some fairy hand, there it was. The fragment had evidently been written after the letter of faith and fondness: it was simply in these words, “Of course, my sweet Castalie, I know your heroism! You are a daughter of heroes, and I should be nothing in your

eyes without suffering a little now and then. We have had a slight skirmish with the Russ, in which an unlucky lance has given me a slight wound. Think nothing of this; a few days will set me on horseback again, and I shall return to you with honour. Even this I write, only lest you might be alarmed by accounts of our unlucky encounter. The Russians are too strong for us already.—Farewell—I must try to rest.”

Iskander wounded, perhaps deserted, perhaps in agony, perhaps dying! Here was a revolution—Castalie slept no more that night. By morn, she was at her father's knees, imploring him, to set out immediately for the Turkish camp, to take her along with him, and either to bring Iskander home with them instantly, or die at his bed-side. But the perils of the attempt seemed to him much to outweigh the necessities of the service. Remonstrance, however, was in vain; the dangers of the journey, the tumults of the camp, the probabilities of actual battle, and the especial furies of a war between rival barbarians, were all light as gossamer, compared with the thought that Iskander was dying. Night closed over the controversy; Chrysopulo sorrowful, but decided; Castalie silent, but decided too. At day-break her father touched at her chamber-door, to bid her prepare for a journey; for the continued passage of Russian troops during the night had so much alarmed him with the prospect of approaching hostilities, that he had made up his mind to retire to Belgrade.

But he was too late; the bird was flown. He found, on further search, that a Hungarian dress of his boy-

hood, with a sabre and pistols, had also vanished ; and all authorized the conjecture, that his fair daughter had made her solitary way to the camp. Chrysopulo instantly resolved to follow her. Time had made him cautious, but nature had made him bold ; and his life was wrapt up in the safety of the lovely creature, who had thus thrown herself out of his protection. Within an hour he was on his way to Shumla.

Every step which he took encreased his anxiety. The roads, or rather the tracks, through the plains of Bulgaria, were covered with Cossacks, Hulans, and the various plunderers whom a state of war always let loose over the country. Four days perpetual toil at length brought him within sight of the Russian headquarters. His military eye would once have been delighted with war, on the magnificent scale on which it now spread before his eyes. A hundred thousand men were under the command of the Russian field-marshal, equipped in the highest style of European service, and moving round the fortifications of Shumla, like lions round a sheep-fold. But Shumla was no sheep-fold ; the Mussulman was within ; and with his Greek, Asiatic, and European troops, showed a front of fire and steel, which even the daring intrepidity of the Muscovite could not penetrate. The advance of the Russians to the position, which, after all, was only a circle of field-works, had been contested by a desperate engagement, in which several of the Russian battalions had been wholly exterminated ; but beyond the field-works not a step could pass. Commanded by the hills, hastily con-

structed, and badly mounted with the old guns, which, for a hundred years, had rusted on the ramparts of Adrianople; they seemed made only to be taken. But such a weight of fire rushed from them, and the musquetry poured such a steady shower of death, that the bravest troops of the Czar recoiled, and the attack was changed into a blockade.

But all was not passive defence. There were many desperate sorties, and the active Moslem made terrible havoc in the solid and heavy ranks of the enemy. Wherever a change of position was observed among the Russian battalions, the Turks were instantly on the alert. A crowd of combatants sprang forward, broke through the Russian echelon; and on their retreat, left the ground covered with corpses. It was in one of these gallant sorties that Iskander had been wounded. His conduct at the head of a troop of the Roumeliote cavalry, had distinguished him so highly from the beginning of the campaign, that he was called on, whenever any enterprise of peculiar hazard was to be undertaken. On this occasion, at the head of a division of Delhis, he had broken his way to the tent of the general, and after throwing all there into the utmost confusion, and carrying off important papers and two standards, had returned, cutting his way through a regiment of the imperial cuirassiers, whose colonel he unhorsed and wounded in the *melée*. But the lance of a Cossack had wounded himself at the next moment, as he was returning in triumph, and he was with difficulty carried from the field.



Chrysopulo found him still feeble from the loss of blood, and hopeless of continuing in command of his men. But the first news of the danger of Castalie changed every thing. He sprang from his bed, called for his charger, and though scarcely able to sit in his saddle, commenced a general inquiry through the camp for the fugitive. The search was wholly unsuccessful : it was pursued along the Russian lines : it was prolonged to the wide country in the Russian rear. All was equally fruitless. At length one evening, when, after a weary pilgrimage, he was returning heavy and heart-broken to his tent, agonized by his wound, which had broken out afresh, and thinking only how he should lavish the remaining hours of his life on some daring exploit and die ; a billet was thrown at his horse's feet by a passing Arab, who hid his face and fled. The billet was in these words: " The daughter of Chrysopulo has been seized by a patrole, and been sent to the palace of the vizier. He returns to-morrow from Stamboul. To-night, therefore, her deliverer must be at the gate of Shumla to rescue, or lose her for ever. At midnight all will be ready."

The lover, overwhelmed by a thousand emotions, instantly galloped to find her father. The message bore every evidence of reality ; and at midnight they were both at the gate, armed and in disguise. The weather was fitted for an attempt to elude the vigilance and fury of a jealous and profligate despotism. It was a perpetual storm. The rain rushed down in such sheets as are to be seen only in the south ; and the thunder roared like the cannonade of a great battle. All was dark,

wild, and silent, except the rage of the tempest ; and they reached unmolested the old and massive portal. They had stood there but a few moments, before a muffled figure pronounced the name of Iskander, and then passed rapidly onward.

They followed ; the streets were deserted by all strangers ; and even of the troops, they saw little more than a few stragglers, lying asleep under the open sheds. It was fortunate that the Russian General was not as well acquainted with the state of affairs as they were. The mysterious guide at length stopped at a high wall, touched a door, the door opened, and through a succession of passages winding and utterly dark, they were conducted to a corridor, through which a small casement gave them a view into an apartment glittering with Turkish luxury. On a sofa, rich with pearl and gold, sat two or three female figures, drest with great magnificence, but veiled. They were evidently the wives of the Vizier, and the chamber a portion of the harem. The guide entered the apartment, spoke a few words, and drawing aside a curtain at the end of the chamber, brought forward to their astonished gaze Castalie ! drest in the most superb costume of a Sultana. Both uttering an exclamation, the father and lover would have rushed forward, had not the guide instantly turned round, and with her finger on her lips, enjoined silence. The Sultanas severally embracing her, and kissing Castalie on the forehead, led her to the door of the apartment, where she was received with wild rapture by Iskander and Chrysopulo. There was now no time to be lost, and they began to thread the

difficult and gloomy passages again ; but the sound of horses' feet, a rush of people, and the sudden glare of torches, told them that some new danger was in their way. The guide whispered, " The Vizier !" and instantly fled. Unknowing how to escape, the unfortunate fugitives, after a few minutes of dreadful embarrassment, and some abortive trials, were seized by the guards. Iskander, frantic, darted on them, and attempted to make his way by main force ; Chrysopulo, more in possession of his senses, yet with agony at heart, tried to persuade. Their efforts were equally in vain ; Castalie fainting between them, was claimed as a fugitive from the household of his highness ; and her companions, fettered hand and foot, were carried to the dungeon of the palace.

But those were not times when even Viziers could do all that they willed. Intelligence of the whole transaction soon by some mysterious means reached the Roumeliote cavalry, and the imprisonment of one of their most distinguished officers produced violent murmurs. Hussein Pasha was a genuine janissary of the old school, and in earlier days would have sent back the remonstrance, with the heads of the discontented hung to their own horses' tails. But ten thousand of the best cavalry in the empire were not now to be treated in the original style ; and, to obviate the imminent chance of their carrying off Vizier and all to the Russian head-quarters, he felt it to be perfectly well worth his consideration to order the fair Castalie to be treated with the most scrupulous deference, for the time.

The prisoners were brought before his camp tribunal.

But nothing could be more complimentary than the language of this great distributor of piastres and bastina-does ; when Iskander, followed by a crowd of his fierce and showy fellow-warriors, made his appearance at this primitive tribunal. A general waving of scymetars followed each compliment, and it was finally decided by the court that the whole affair had been a mistake, and that the " brave Roumeliote had entered the palace *only* to signalize his zeal for the service of the Sublime Porte." How this conclusion was arrived at, is not for the humbler world to question ; but diplomacy is nearly the same, under the turban or under the hat. Castalie was of course, to be forthwith put under the care of her natural protector.

But the hours passed away, and she did not make her appearance. Evening shed her changing yellows and crimsons on the Balkan, but no Castalie came. Night advanced, dropping her huge velvet curtains over camps and citadels, marble mountains, and brown valleys, soldier and chieftain ; and still no tidings of the loveliest of prisoners arrived. Iskander was in an agony ; Chrysopulo was indignant ; but where was the resource ? Midnight was past, and still they were sitting together at the entrance of their tent, sometimes revolving wild schemes of vengeance, and sometimes, as they gazed on the stars that moved above them in oriental splendour, like topaz troops and columns, pouring out for some celestial campaign ; asking each other, whether there were not some world among those glories, where injustice and treachery were shut out, and beauty and

truth might live, without being at the mercy of knavish old pashas.

They were suddenly roused by a whisper, from behind the folds of the tent, Its words were —“The pasha has seen his prisoner, has been struck with her beauty, and has sent her as a present to the Sultan’s harem at Stamboul. She set out an hour ago with a guard.”

They both started up, but all search was vain. Whether the voice came from mortal or fairy, was beyond all knowledge. But the words were fire to both. Iskander, tortured with fever of mind and body, was still wholly helpless. But Chrysopulo’s more mature mind resolved upon the perilous task, of going boldly into the divan of the pasha, reproaching him with his perfidy, and demanding the instant restoration of Castalie. Taking his pistols and scymetar, to execute vengeance, if justice should be refused, he instantly set forward for the palace.

Iskander watched him through the dusk, with many a bitter feeling of his own feebleness ; until he was left alone. Such moments leave no pang to be inflicted by death. The torture of the hour overwhelmed his fortitude ; and he was almost about to try whether the point of his dagger were not the speediest cure for his intolerable pain, when a chance sound of a trumpet echoed on the air. It was, perhaps, only the signal of some returning patrol. But it changed the whole current of his ideas. “ Was he to sit pining there, while Castalie was whirling away, heart-broken, to the accursed towers of the Sultan ?” He went silently round to the tents of his troop. In

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a few moments all were mounted. They moved through the darkness like so many phantoms, and before a word was spoken, or the first streak of dawn was tingeing the sky, they were many a league from Shumla.

The measure was desperate, and the result must be ruin ; to the pasha's camp it must be impossible to return, except to lay his head under the axe. But passion has no ear for those things ; and in his decision, he felt even his strength revive. Determination always gives vigour ; it is suspense that breaks down both body and mind. Behind him was the bow-string, before him was his love. Who shall doubt to which quarter of the horizon his eyes oftenest turned ?

It was evening before he saw any other signs of man, than the ravage made by the Asiatic troops in their march from the Hellespont. His heart again sank. Could he have taken the wrong course ? Could the intelligence have deceived him ? Was the whole only a stratagem to draw him away from the camp, and brand him at the same moment with treason, and desertion.

The sun was sinking, as he came within sight of the pass of Pyrgo Harouni ; and on the verge of that deep and wild chasm his troop pulled up their panting horses, in general despair of overtaking the object of their pursuit. But in another moment the sparkle of a lance caught his eye, and the tall caps of a corps of Spahis were soon after seen slowly emerging through the forest that sheeted the precipitous side of this memorable glen. No time was now to be lost. Iskander struck spurs into his horse. He was gallantly followed, and soon came up

with the Spahis. They faced round, and a fierce struggle commenced. After a repeated discharge of pistols, and the heavy interchange of sabre blows, the quick glance of the capitano perceived a party of Spahis gradually moving to the rear, with a carriage in the centre, while the remainder continued to skirmish. All was now on the point of being lost. With one furious effort he flung himself headlong on this troop, and tore his way, sabre in hand, to the carriage. He was recognized at the instant. In another instant, Castalie had sprung out of its door, and was in his arms. Snatching her up on the saddle, the lover in an indescribable confusion of delight, anxiety, and alarm, flew back to rejoin his troop; but the firing of pistols, and the clash of sabres was still heard, and he made a circuit to avoid the immediate collision. But roads in Bulgaria are the very reverse of Spanish causeways; they are neither made to be traversed by armies, nor to display royal pageants, nor to last for ever. He had scarcely plunged into the first hollow, when he found himself in the primitive forest. All path was lost, and, but for the occasional gush of the wind, or the twinkle of a star through the tall branches, he might have conceived himself in an immense dungeon.

But the sound of voices was at length heard; the gleam of a fire shone through the trees, and cautiously dismounting from his horse, and stealing forward, where every step was full of imminent danger, he discovered it to proceed from a low hovel, one of those ruined post-houses, which, few and far be-

tween, had been once erected by the Turkish government, for the Sultan's road to Vienna! The hut was now full; and songs, brawling, and the voices of intoxication arose from within. This was a trying moment; and his first impulse was, to fly. But he had been seen, and a crowd of wild-looking men were instantly at his heels. He and his companion were brought back to the hut, and the head of the band advanced to examine them. To the astonishment of Iskander, he found in this leader a Greek, who had been his fellow-student at the college of Scio; but who had disappeared at the sacking of that lovely and unfortunate island by the Turks, and was given up for dead. All was now recognition and hospitality.

"Ask no questions here," said the Capitano Haivali, as he saw the new comers looking with some curiosity at the grotesque and daring figures, who lay carousing, gaming, or sleeping along the huge old hall.

"This is time of war, you know," said he; "and men may be soldiers without wearing the colours of either Moslem or Muscovite. For my part, as both have used me ill in turn, I see no reason why I should prefer one to the other."

"And thus you preserve an armed neutrality, which entitles you to choose your own side at discretion?" said Iskander, with a smile.

"Yes; I see you know the world. I only follow the wisdom of statesmen, and all other men; in taking care of myself, first making charity begin at home, and making it a rule that Cristofero Haivali shall never



want the comforts of a Greek and a gentlemen, while either sultan or czar can supply him."

A slight disturbance outside the building stopped the further confession; and a Spahi was brought in a prisoner. He was instantly searched with professional dexterity, and a roll of paper was brought to light.

"Ha!" exclaimed the bandit chief, "this will be worth something. Here is an order from Hussein, for twenty thousand men, to cross the Balkan within two days, and attack the Russians in flank, while the pasha makes a sortie and falls upon their front from Shumla." Another paper was opened,—“Ha, ha, ha!” he exclaimed, “by the Panagia, Iskander, you *are* born under a lucky star. Here you are destined to figure in history. I suppose an execution or two is required at the capital, to whet the courage of the Moslems, as they teach panthers to fight by feeding them on blood. The vizier promises to send the heads of two famous rebels, named Chrysopulo and Iskander, to decorate the gate of the seraglio; accompanied by the more tender present of a maiden of the most surpassing beauty, to shine as a new risen star in the palace of his highness the Brother of the Sun and Moon. Ha, ha, ha!” the captain roared with extravagant mirth.

“What is to be done?” exclaimed Iskander and Castalie, in one breath; “we can only die together.”

“Yes, forty, fifty, or perhaps a hundred years hence. But take my advice, and live as long as you can. You see, that to return to Bulgaria and your

cottage, rosy as it is, would only be to send you, most gallant of capitani, to the axe; and you, most lovely of Venuses, to the sultan. The truth is, if you are wise, you will come with me; and within these two hours I must be at the Russian head-quarters. The Spahi's despatch will make my fortune."

Within a few minutes the party were mounted; and by daybreak they had entered the Russian lines. The two capitani were conducted to the tent of Diebitsch, and had a short but important conference with that celebrated field-marshal.

Iskander, tall and handsome, looked with astonishment on the low stature and deformed shape of this distinguished officer; but he observed that his eye was remarkably intelligent, and his countenance, though worn with fatigue, was that of a singularly vivid mind.

"I see how it is," rapidly spoke the general; "we are teaching the Turks to manœuvre. But we must make them pay for their education—the Balkan must be seized—the flankers must be outflanked. Can you conduct a body of troops to-night to the summit of the ridge? You must both set out the moment that the battalions are ready. But, gentlemen, until then," said he, "I must, for the sake of the service, keep you at head-quarters, and beg of you not to be seen by any one. Farewell."

At night-fall fifteen thousand infantry moved steadily and silently from the camp; the two capitani led the column. The vigilance of the vizier had completely slept, and while he dreamed only of seeing the Musco-

vites melt away before the iron lines of Shumla, they were already in his rear. The few Turks who had been posted among the forests that crowned the mountain, were easily broken by the Russian bayonet; and by dawn the Russian battalions were fixed where an army could not have shaken them. In twelve hours more, Diebitsch himself had reached the summit, and from that noble ridge looked down upon the plains which stretch to the Dardanelles. The gilded towers of Adrianople glittered in the sun like a cluster of distant stars, as his solid squares moved rapidly on to avoid the shock of the sultan's Spahis. But Hussein was in utter ignorance of this gallant and showy manœuvre, until the sight of the Russian eagles, waving among the precipices above his head, aroused him to his peril. All this confusion was followed by the treaty of Hunkiar Skelessi, which at once acknowledged the defeat of Turkey, and has prepared for her extinction.

Five years after, a train of travelling carriages with outriders, and all the appurtenances of a noble family, was one day seen to draw up at the ruins of a cottage on the banks of the Danube; from the first alighted an old man, who wandered away silently among the shrubs, which still preserved some appearance of a garden. He was followed by a young female, who wept at the sight of the ruins; and by three children, who alternately wept to see their mother weep, and played among the flowers. Last of all came, attended by several domestics, a man of a noble figure in the uniform of a Russian general. His wife and children

flung themselves on his bosom, and they all sat down in the midst of the ruins.

"How little I once thought," said the old man, "to see this cottage again."

"But shall it not be rebuilt, shall we not have this little garden and vines and roses, and be happy?" exclaimed the children.

"No, my loves," said he, "you shall have, not a cottage, but a mansion; but, as to your being happy, I can do nothing for you; that depends upon ourselves. The secret is in the heart, the success must be your own."

There was something in the tone of her father's voice which brought a gush of tears—but they were not bitter tears—into the fine eyes of Castalie; and to hide them she fell on his shoulder. Iskander, now the stately soldier, stood gazing fondly on the emotion of his beautiful wife. The children, with their eyes fixed on both, sat, for the first time, totally mute. At length, Chrysopulo, in almost the solemnity of prayer, said; "My children, if exultation is unwise, neither is despair made for man. We have had our troubles, but they have passed away. There is one Supreme Spirit of good, who never forgets, never sleeps, and never is weary. Like that sun, which we now see sinking into night, and which, even in night, is the great sustainer, the purifier, and the fertilizer of the globe, the darkest hours of our being are not beyond the influence of that Spirit of wisdom and mercy. Let us in our trials have faith, and in our triumphs, gratitude."

WERNER.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF CAIRO AND THE PYRAMIDS.

BY OCTAVIAN BLEWITT.

IF the power of association be sufficient to excite strong emotions when we tread the soil which has been consecrated by the genius of Greece and Rome, its effect is infinitely surpassed when the traveller gazes for the first time upon the stream of the glorious Nile. Neither the Tiber, nor the Ilyssus, nor even the Scamander, produced in my mind half the train of feelings inspired by the first sight of that magnificent river, when I emerged from the canal of Alexandria, and watched its course as it swept by the town of Atfeh. Its association with the history of the Jewish people—the civilization it witnessed when Egypt, the mother of philosophy and of science, was the chosen school from which the Greek sages drew their stores of wisdom—the stupendous cities it has seen rise and fall before the ravages of the barbarian and the encroachment of the desert—the history of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies—the brilliant career of the Saracenic chivalry—the struggles of the early christian church in

the city of the patriarchs—and the no less remarkable events which have taken place upon its banks in every age of modern times, all combine to produce emotions which defy description. The scenery of the river between Atfeh and Cairo is very tame—the stream in the month of May is low, and the only exception to the general monotony, are numerous flocks of pelicans, and the occurrence of several villages of mud-huts, marked by no peculiar features, except the mosque, the minaret, and the palm. The land on each side of the Nile is low and sandy; the fields are cultivated with great care, and at frequent intervals we passed the rude water-wheel of earthen pots, by which the soil at this season is irrigated. The heat was most oppressive; the Kamseen wind was blowing upon us like the blast of a furnace. The thermometer suspended in the shade of our cabin, with open doors and windows, stood on the 15th at  $96^{\circ}$  at noon;  $101^{\circ}$  at 3 P. M.; and at  $80^{\circ}$  at 10 at night in the open air. There are moreover other more serious annoyances, inseparable from a voyage in a Nile boat, which are unhappily too soon discovered by the inexperienced traveller. But if the day is monotonous, and the night has its terrors for the sleeper, it is impossible to describe the beauty or the sublimity of a May night on the Nile. We were moored one evening in a bend of the river, when the rapidity of the current was too great to allow the sailors to row; and we accordingly rested for the night. And such a night it was! The faint breeze of the evening had died away; the Nile

glided by the boat like a flowing mirror, bright with the reflection of the evening planets and innumerable stars, which lit up the heavens with a brilliancy unknown in other latitudes. The rippling of the stream in the reflection of the planet was like the phosphorescence of the Mediterranean. At length the moon, now nearly at her full, rose behind a grove of palm trees, pouring her silver light upon the river; star after star disappeared before her, and the whole stream, the banks, the palm-groves, and the heavens themselves glowed in the light with a brilliancy of which no northern country can possess the idea.

On the 5th day we landed at Boulak, the port of Cairo, after an unusually tedious voyage. Boulak is the Manchester of Egypt—a distinction which it owes chiefly to our countryman, the late Gallway Bey. Sufficient cloth is made here in the Pacha's manufactories to supply the army and meet the demand of the market besides; and its manufactures of cotton, both in thread and cloth, as well as its founderies, supplied with reverberating furnaces, are among the wonders of the country. The appearance of Cairo from a distance, backed by the ridge of the Mokattam, and surmounted by its celebrated citadel, is extremely imposing. Its almost numberless minarets, and the broad and handsome road, crowded with Mohammedans in their flowing robes, some on donkeys, others hurrying along with the air of unusual business, at once impress the traveller that he is approaching a great and important city. In these times, when almost every account of Egypt de-

scribes some new wonder or improvement, it can scarcely be surprising that the traveller entering the city of the Khaliffs, should be able to ride at once to an English hotel ; and there are few persons who have been in Cairo who cannot bear testimony to the exceeding comfort and attention experienced in that establishment. A few years ago, two European hotels at Alexandria, and another at Cairo, on the very borders of the great desert, would have been considered a mere chimera ; but steam has destroyed distance, and carried the luxuries and civilization of Europe to the remotest parts of Egypt.

The city of Cairo contains much more to excite the attention of the traveller than is generally supposed ; especially since the admirable work of Mr. Lane on "The Modern Egyptians," has enabled even the most superficial observer to understand and study upon the spot the novelties which he sees. Almost the first object visited by a stranger in Cairo is the bazaar ; certainly there is none which will more surprise him if he has not previously seen those of Constantinople ; they are similarly covered over, but their architecture is more lofty and imposing. The crowd of Mohammedans, Jews, Greeks, Armenians, and Franks, bargaining, cheapening, and bustling, amidst an incessant clamour, above which was heard the sharp voice of the camel or donkey-driver, demanding passage for its cargo, all form a singular scene, which becomes tiresome after the second or third visit. The shops, resembling the booths of an English country fair, are



well stocked with various articles, from the rich shawls of Cashmere and the splendid amber mouth-pieces for the pipes, down to calico, tobacco-bags, and slippers. There is no officious *empressement* on the part of the seller, and a stranger is treated with invariable courtesy. The rich colours of the costumes add much to the general effect; but among this assemblage of respectable and dignified Mohammedans, the ordinary Frank population, composed mostly of needy adventurers from the Mediterranean ports, ill-favoured and ill-clothed in the worst dresses of the worst European fashions, form a sad and striking contrast.

The mad-house and the slave-market may well be classed in the same category; for the soul sickens at the sight of so large an amount of mental and bodily affliction. The mad-house is an awful relic of the barbarous treatment pursued, not many years ago, in most countries of Europe. It contains thirteen men and fourteen women: each person has a separate cell, like those of wild beasts in a menagerie, but by no means so habitable. An iron grating serves as a door and window, and to the massive bars of this the sufferers are chained, with heavy irons. They are never taken out, even for ablution; and there they remain, hideous and appalling spectacles, till death terminates their woes.

But near this place is another exhibition, even more humiliating, because in this there is no unconsciousness of misery—the great slave-market. When we visited it, the court-yard was crowded with young negroes of

both sexes, most of them perfectly naked, and here and there a group busily anointing themselves with fat. Round the sides of the court were rooms or cells, on the ground-floor, and a series of apartments within a gallery above, all of which were filled with Abyssinians, Nubians, and Negroes, waiting for a purchaser. There were some hundreds thus offered for inspection. Throughout this wretched scene, there prevailed a general appearance of mirth, as if every tie of home and kindred, relationship and friends, had been burst asunder; and all their pain and trouble being considered to be past, the future was the only object of their thoughts. Many of the women, rendered desperate probably by the treatment of the dealers, laughed and joked at us with a wild and intelligible rudeness. There were, however, some who were unwilling to show their faces, and covered themselves with their veils. The master requested that we would accompany him to his private house, to see two young Abyssinians, whom he represented as so beautiful, that he never allowed them to enter the common market. We proceeded to his house, in company with our two dragoons, and three Egyptian officers decorated with the order of the star and crescent, who went not from curiosity, but as real purchasers. The two girls were brought in; they were very light-coloured, with fine long hair; their forms were handsome, but with a great tendency to stoutness. They were made to show their arms and feet, and walk to and fro, precisely as a horse is trotted out to show his points. The price demanded

was thirty pounds a-piece. One of these poor creatures wept bitterly; the other joked facetiously with the master, whose expression was the personification of vice.

The citadel of Cairo was built by Sultan Saladin, under the direction of Karakous, who defended Ptolemais against Philip Augustus. It stands below Mount Mokattam, the extremity of the Arabian chain, in which have recently been discovered the quarries of alabaster, that supplied the ancient architects both of Egypt and of Rome. Before entering the great gate of the citadel, is situated the Pacha's menagerie which, although small, contains the largest and finest lions I ever saw. The citadel is entirely surrounded by a double wall, between which are now placed the manufactories of the Pacha, the founderies of artillery, the manufacture of copper sheets for sheathing his ships, the fabric of saddles and other equipments for the troops; these works are aided by a high-pressure steam engine. It was between these walls that the destruction of the Mamlooks took place in 1811. Over the tower of the outer gate is a broken wall, from which the only one who saved himself, leapt with his horse.

The height is hardly less than forty feet. Death appeared certain to him in either extreme—it was certain if he hesitated; it was perhaps to be escaped if he attempted to leap the parapet. The horse was dashed to atoms—but the rider still lives, and is often spoken of as the “last of the Mamlooks.” The two principal points of interest in the citadel are the so called, “Joseph’s

well," and the ruins of his palace. The palace of Youssouf, better known to us as the Sultan Saladin, is now in ruins, and vast quantities of the materials have been employed by the Pacha in building his new mosque. The columns are red granite, and enough yet remains to mark the magnificence of the rival of Richard Cœur de Lion. "Joseph's well," also constructed by Saladin, very much resembles the celebrated well of St. Patrick at Orveito. It is said to be upwards of two-hundred and fifty feet in depth. It can be descended to the bottom by a safe stair, protected by a parapet, the whole being cut out of the solid rock. It is about fifteen feet in diameter, and we ascertained by repeated and careful experiments, that a stone dropt from the mouth did not reach the bottom under six seconds. The palace of the Pacha is a fine building, more European than Turkish, both in architecture and decoration. The rooms are large and furnished with English chandeliers; they have double windows, and were painted by European artists: the palace contains a large harem. But the most interesting sight in the citadel, is the magnificent view of the city, and the neighbourhood which it commands. In interest it is second only to the view from the Great Pyramid.

Immediately beyond, and close to the walls of the city, on the east, is the Desert of Suez; to the westward flows the Nile, marking, by the lines of vegetation which bound its banks, the blessings it carries in its course.

Beyond it, surrounded by the vast sandy plains of the

Great Desert, are the Eternal Pyramids. Before us lies the City of the Khalifs, with its fifty quarters and its seventy gates, adorned with no less than two-hundred and fifty fountains, and nearly four-hundred mosques, whose elaborate and beautiful minarets have no shadow of a rival either in Stamboul itself, or in any other part of that great empire, which acknowledges the standard of the Crescent and the Star. But as if Egypt could not be Egypt without contradictions and anomalies, the impressions excited by Saladin and the Khalifs, are disturbed by the din of the smith's hammer, and the noise of the high-pressure Glasgow steam engine which puffs away below us. But the steam-engine, with all its influence, is nothing to the moral changes which have been recently introduced—changes which have struck at the very root of popular prejudice, and may be said to form an era in the history of the regeneration of the country. One of them is the establishment of a Midwifery Hospital, where Egyptian women are regularly and scientifically educated. It is also understood that a European lady had recently been sent for by the Pacha to educate his daughters in the European system. But the means by which Christianity is now spreading its blessings, if not under the express protection of the government, at least under the secret understanding that the schools of the English missionaries are not to be interfered with, are even more extraordinary. The service of the Church of England is regularly performed in the Chapel of the British and Foreign Bible Society by German Missionaries, and in

the English language. The clergymen wear the Fez cap and moustaches, according to the custom of the Frank residents. The congregation, when we were present, consisted of three English ladies, wives of missionaries and governesses of the schools, and about sixty young boys in Egyptian costume, who gave out the responses, sung the hymns (in English), and supplied the place of clerk. The able superintendent of this remarkable establishment, is the Rev. W. Lieden, who informed me that the society is now educating eighty boys, chiefly Arabs, and one-hundred and twenty girls, of Copt, Maronite and Egyptian parents. The boys are all taught English, and eight of the girls are similarly instructed by an English governess.

Our space will not allow us to enter at present upon the other wonders of the city—its mosques, magicians, and its numerous public institutions ; we will therefore proceed at once to the Pyramids. We started from Cairo in the afternoon, in order to arrive in time to see a sunset in the Desert. The distance of the Pyramids from Cairo is about ten or twelve miles. After crossing the river, we examined the celebrated chicken ovens of Ghizeh, where the process of hatching by artificial heat is so successfully practised. We proceeded hence along a road leading by a fine forest of palms, and arrived at the village of the Bedouins in time to commence the ascent before sunset.

The plain between the Pyramids and the Nile is richly cultivated, and the vegetation does not fail until it arrives within a short distance of them. We began

its northern side, which died away at a great distance. It does not exist on the side where the position of the second pyramid might be supposed to explain its existence ; and it is difficult to account for so clear and defined an echo proceeding from a plain where there are scarcely any elevations of surface for miles together.

But the view from the top of the pyramid is almost inferior in absorbing interest to the feelings it inspires. The Nile—the Desert—those two words, the very mention of which is magical—the sites of such cities as Memphis, Heliopolis, and the Egyptian Babylon—the city of Cairo, and its association with Saladin and the Khalifs, all suggest so many trains of thought, that the mind becomes bewildered in contemplating them. And then, when we consider how many thousand years have rolled over these stupendous monuments, and left them unscathed, as if they were destined for eternity,—when we reflect that the greatest heroes and philosophers of antiquity have perhaps stood upon these few stones which form the summit, we are at once supplied with a lesson on the littleness of human life, that no other work of human hands can possibly convey.









